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SERMONS,

ADDRESSES, AND LETTERS.

SELECTED FROM THE WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

REV. ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, D.D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE INDEPENDENT OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

AN ENGRAVED PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR,

A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE,

AND THE

SERMON PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEATH.

BY REV. ANDREW FLINN, D.D.

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED.

SOLOMON

CHARLESTOWN:

PRINTED BY S. ETHERIDGE, JR.

1816.

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PREFACE.

THIS volume is designed as a memorial of departed worth. It appears under disadvantages common to all posthumous works. The SERMONS and ADDRESSES, with one or two exceptions, were prepared by the Author for the press. The rest of the volume, consisting of selections from his numerous letters to his friends, are the effusions of a pious and affectionate heart, and penned either for their comfort, instruction, or gratification, without the remotest idea of their ever appearing before the public. The Editors have found the task of selection, in these circumstances, both delicate and difficult; delicate, lest we should encroach on the sanctuary of private friendship; difficult, on account of the great mass of letters before us, from which the selection has been made. Our difficulty has arisen, not from a deficiency, but from a redundancy, of valuable materials. We have used our best judgment in making this compilation, from the writings of one of the best of men, and of ministers, and submit it to the candour of its readers, and the blessing of God.

Though this volume is published more especially to gratify the numerous friends of Dr. Keith, and to them we are sure it will be very precious; yet, we doubt not, it will prove a useful and valued work to many others also, and remain a monument of the affectionate piety, christian charity and meekness, respectable talents and acquirements, and ministerial fidelity of its Author, to the latest generation.

We close our Preface with the following letter, addressed to the widow of Dr. Keith, shortly after his decease, as a valuable testimonial of the high estimation in which he was held by the most respectable people of his charge; and as furnishing also a strong reason for the publication of this volume.

CHARLESTON, MARCH 31, 1814.

MRS. KEITH.

RESPECTED MADAM,

WHILE we partake in the extensive grief, which the much lamented death of your excellent husband has excited, one source of alleviating our distress has been opened to our minds. With your permission, he who when living faithfully fed us with the bread of life, may, though dead, yet continue to instruct and comfort, not only us and our children, but multitudes who never had the happiness, which we enjoyed, of hearing from his lips the gracious messages of divine truth. To withhold these precious remains of our much loved Pastor from the public eye, would,

in our opinion, be an injury to the community, as it would deprive them of a source of improvement and consolation, which, under existing circumstances, promises to be of extensive utility. We therefore most earnestly request you to deliver over to some judicious friend, the manuscripts of your beloved husband, that a selection may be made from them for publication. In so doing you will not only oblige us, but many who have never heard his voice; and at the same time, carry on the good work to which his whole life was devoted.

We are,

With great esteem and affection,

Your friends,

ELIZABETH B. HATTER.
MARY L. THOMAS.
SUSANNA SMILIE.

JOSIAH SMITH.
WILLIAM ROACH.
KINSEY BURDEN.
NATHANIEL RUSSELL.
THOMAS JONES.
ADAM GILCHRIST.
WILLIAM PAYNE.
W. S. SMITH.
T. FORD.
DAVID RAMSAY.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE

REV. DR. KEITH.

ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, the subject of this memoir, son of WILLIAM and MARGARET KEITH, was born in Newtown, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, January 20th, 1755. His parents were members of the Presbyterian church, in the place of his nativity, and were held in high estimation, in the circle of their acquaintance, for their piety and virtue. They educated their children, (two sons and two daughters, so far as we can ascertain from the documents before us) with exemplary fidelity, taking unwearied pains to pour religious and other useful instruction into their youthful minds, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In the subject of this memoir, at a very early age, they discerned a vivacity of imagination, a quickness of discernment, and a disposition and aptness to learn, which led them to determine, in humble dependence on the divine blessing, to give him the advantages of a public education, with a view to qualify him to act in a large sphere of usefulness. Accordingly, at the age of about fourteen, he was sent to Princeton, in New Jersey, where he commenced and finished his classical education, under that very learned and excellent man, Rev. Dr. JOHN WITHERSPOON, as Pres-

ident of Nassau Hall, and the Proprietor and Director of the Grammar School, annexed to the College, and then taught by Mr. *Nathaniel Erwin*, late minister of Neshaminy. Such was the diligence and success with which he pursued his preparatory studies, that at every examination he was honored with a premium. The period he spent at the Grammar School, previous to his admission into the College, was much shorter than usual. His whole course of classical education was completed in six years, at the early age of twenty. But the event, which above all others distinguished the period of his residence at the Grammar School, and which laid the foundation for his future usefulness in the church of Christ, was his conversion. Here, as appears from a MS. account of the event now before the writer, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, the eyes of his mind were opened; he perceived, felt and lamented the exceeding sinfulness of his own heart and life; and renouncing all dependence on any thing he could do to effect his own salvation, was led to rely wholly on the merits and mediation of a crucified Saviour. In his own time, the Lord was pleased to diffuse the light of his reconciled countenance into his anxious and humbled soul. On hearing the joyful and welcome intelligence of this event, his parents exclaimed, "Now hath the Lord answered our prayers in his tender mercies toward that son, whom we had specially dedicated to his service." During his whole collegiate course, he continued a warm hearted, active, exemplary christian.

Soon after he had completed his classical education, in the autumn of 1775, he was invited to take charge of a Latin school at Elizabethtown, in New Jersey, which

he taught with the approbation, both of his pupils, and of the Trustees. But this employment fell short of his great object. He accordingly resigned the school, and placed himself under the care of the Rev. Robert Smith, of Lancaster County, in conformity to whose directions, residing at his father's house, he pursued and finished his course of theological studies, preparatory to his entrance on the work of the ministry.

In the year 1778, he put himself under the care of the Presbytery of Philadelphia; and in the autumn of the same year, received from that body a license to preach the gospel. The following winter he spent in a preaching tour, from which he returned to his father's house in April, suffering under a sore and most painful pleuretic complaint, which affected his liver, and imminently threatened his life. After a long and distressing sickness, he was relieved, though not restored to firm health, in an extraordinary manner. The matter which had collected internally, and caused his pain, discharged itself, in consequence of the application of a blister, near his shoulder blade, and his recovery immediately followed.

In March, 1780, having previously preached at Alexandria, in Virginia, he received from the Presbyterian church and society in that place, left vacant by the removal of the Rev. William Thom, an affectionate and unanimous call, (to which "the inhabitants of every denomination echoed universal consent,") to settle among them, as their pastor, "promising obedience to his doctrine and discipline, so far as they should be agreeable to the word of God." The call from this church he accepted, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, with a view to his taking the pas-

toral charge of it. On the 30th of May, 1780, he received his dismission from the Presbytery of Philadelphia to that of Donnegall, who had the care of the church over which he had been ordained. He had previously received a call from a church in Allentown, New Jersey, to which he sent a negative but affectionate answer.

In the autumn of 1784, he was attacked by a fever, which weakened still more his already enfeebled constitution. The following reflections, after his recovery from this sickness, are worthy to be preserved. They are contained in a letter of his to his brother and sister, dated Alexandria, September 7, 1785, "I am not without hope, that these afflictive dispensations, are the corrections of a Father's hand, mercifully designed to promote my spiritual improvement; and in connexion with that, my truest and highest happiness. I sensibly feel the need in which I stand of frequent chastisement, to disengage my affections from an inordinate attachment to the world; to impress a livelier conviction of the evil of sin; to excite to greater fidelity, in the discharge of duty, and to awaken more ardent desires, and diligent preparations for the happiness of a better life. Should it be productive of these happy fruits, and these I hope, through the attending blessing, and sanctifying spirit of God, will not be altogether wanting. I shall then have reason to reckon my affliction among the number of my choicest mercies, and to acknowledge with joy and thankfulness, "That it is good for me that I have been afflicted." This is the language of a truly christian faith and piety; but the spirit from which it flows, is as difficult to be acquired and maintained, as it is desirable to be possessed. Happy truly are they, and they

alone, whose souls have been formed by the grace of God for the principles of our holy religion, to rejoice in the prosperity of this life, as though they rejoiced not, and to weep under the sorrows of it, as though they wept not; considering the time as short, and the fashion of this world as passing swiftly away. Soon, very soon, my dear brother and sister, will it pass away from us, or we from it. Let us then seriously and impartially inquire, whether we are properly prepared to take our final leave of it; whether we have those satisfying evidences of a christian faith, and repentance, and love, and obedience, and a conscience so void of offence both towards God and man, that we can welcome the prospect of eternity, in the animating persuasion or hope, that the joys prepared for the good and faithful servant in the kingdom of our Lord, shall be our everlasting portion. Let these, therefore, be constantly made the chief objects of our attention and regard, and let us not forget to help each other by our mutual prayers, that we may find mercy, and obtain grace, to be faithful in the things, which so deeply concern the safety and happiness of our immortal souls."

The feelings here expressed, were not left to expire without a corresponding effort to render some acceptable service to the Lord, by doing good to his fellow men. Accordingly, in Nov. 1785, he prepared the following plan of a Society, which, from the wisdom and liberality it displays, does great credit to his understanding and heart.

"*Outlines of a plan for forming a religious society in the town of Alexandria.*

It is conceived that a society, founded on catholic principles, so as to unite christians of different persua-

sions or professions, for the purposes of social prayer, and other religious exercises, may contribute greatly through the divine blessing, to the spiritual improvement of their own souls; and serve also to diffuse the spirit and the blessings of the gospel among others, by whom they have not yet been experienced. The circumstances of this place, where the people of God are few in number, and in some measure, divided under different names and forms, while the whole current of general example, is opposed to a serious profession, and conscientious practice of true religion; forcibly call upon all who are sincerely resolved to live godly in Christ Jesus, and are duly concerned for the honor of the Master whom they serve: to overlook the little differences subsisting between them, and to combine their best exertions, both to secure their own integrity and stedfastness, in the service of their God and Redeemer, and to engage others to become followers of them, as they are of Christ. In order to these ends, no means appear more promising in themselves, or more likely to be approved and seconded by the great Head of the church, than such institutions as this; wherein those who profess faith in the same Saviour, who acknowledge subjection to the laws of the same gospel, and entertain the hope of sharing in the same inheritance of the saints in light; suspending their zeal for those less essential opinions and modes of practice, in which they vary from each other; associate together in that spirit of christian charity, which is the bond of perfection, and cordially unite in fervent prayers and supplications for each other, and for all men, in mutual exhortations, to provoke unto love and to good works, and in the use of all other prudent and affectionate en-

deavours to encourage each others' hearts, and strengthen each others' hands in the common and great christian cause. The hope that God will own and bless, to the important purposes in view, a design which so professedly and directly aims at the advancement of his glory, in the promotion of the interests of religion, is abundantly authorized, not only by the obvious reasonableness of the thing, and its manifest conformity to the Divine will; but by the express declarations of his written word, which, among other instances, furnishes us with an illustrious example of the success of such a measure, among his ancient people the Jews, when it informs us, that "They who feared the Lord, spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it," and declared, that they should be "his, in the day when he made up his jewels;" and in addition to this, affords us a most special and gracious promise, for the encouragement of christians in all succeeding ages, when our Saviour assures his disciples, that if even, "any two of them shall agree on earth, touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by his Father, who is in heaven;" for said he, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Influenced therefore by these considerations, and trusting that our views and intentions are pure and upright, with earnest desires, and animating hopes, that God may by his counsel direct, and by his blessing prosper, our pious undertaking, we whose names are hereunto subscribed, do agree,

1. That a Society shall be formed for the purposes above expressed, to consist of persons professing godliness, and maintaining a conversation becoming the

gospel of Christ, without any regard being had to the denominations to which they belong, or the names by which they are distinguished.

2. That the exercises performed in the Society, shall be sacred singing, prayer, and exhortation, or reading some portion of the word of God,-or of other books of practical religion, generally approved.

3. That when a minister or preacher of good standing, of any denomination, shall be present, he shall be invited, or have liberty, to address the Society on any subject of religion, only avoiding, as much as possible, all topics of controversy.

4. That the first meeting of the Society, shall be on Wednesday evening, the 16th of the present month, and that its future meetings shall be continued regularly, on the same evening, every fortnight, or at such other times as the Society may hereafter find to be most convenient and advisable ; and that all its meetings shall be attended by the members with as much punctuality, as their circumstances will possibly permit.

5. That regular members choosing to withdraw from their connexion with the Society, shall have liberty to do it, without being considered as incurring blame or reproach on that account ; but that members whose immoral conduct, or irregular behaviour, may be injurious to the credit or interest of the Society, shall be excluded.

6. That persons not in connexion with the Society, but desirous of attending its meetings, and behaving seriously and decently, shall be allowed to frequent them, when they think proper."

We give the plan of this Society at large, in this Memoir, because, so far as we know, it was the first of the kind proposed in our country; and because it is an exhibition of sound sense and judgment, is a good model for imitation, and happily express the pious and benevolent feelings of its author, at this early period of his ministry. We know not whether this plan ever went into operation.

Until the fall of 1788, Mr. Keith continued the affectionate and faithful pastor of the church in Alexandria; when, having received and accepted a call to settle as colleague pastor with the Rev. WILLIAM HOLLINGSHEAD, over the Independent or Congregational church in Charleston, S. Carolina, he removed to that city, and was inaugurated at the close of November, in the year above mentioned.*

With what acceptance he fulfilled his eight years ministry to the Congregation in Alexandria, we learn by the following extract from their remonstrance to the Presbytery, against his dismission, dated Sept. 10, 1788. They say, "In the summer of 1780, the Rev. Mr. Keith became pastor of this church, by the acceptance of our call; and ever since that period has stood high in the estimation of all denominations, and particularly so with his own, whose exertions for his accommodation are perhaps unequalled, and sufficiently evidence their regard and attachment. There have subsisted no feuds nor animosities to disturb the peace of our church, to render his residence here uncomfortable to himself, or his labours unprofitable to the people." To this we subjoin the certificate of his "dismission from the

* See his Inaugural Sermon, p. 49, of this Work.

Presbytery to which he belonged, as a further testimonial of the high estimation in which he was held.

"IN PRESBYTERY, BALTIMORE, SEPT. 16, 1788.

A CALL was handed to the Rev. Isaac S. Keith, from the Independent or Congregational Church in Charleston, S. Carolina, inviting him to take the pastoral charge thereof, in conjunction with the Rev. William Hollingshead, of which, after some pause, with due solemnity, he signified his acceptance.

The Presbytery, therefore, do hereby declare the pastoral relation between the Rev. Isaac S. Keith, and the Presbyterian church in Alexandria dissolved, dismiss him from their body, to undertake the charge of the church in Charleston aforesaid, in conjunction with the Rev. William Hollingshead, recommending him very affectionately to both, as a valuable evangelical minister of the fairest character, and fervently pray, that they may remain long together, in perfect harmony, for mutual edification, and the promotion of true religion.

Signed, PATRICK ALLISON, *Mod'r.*"

By the removal of this worthy minister of Christ, he was placed in a more elevated and conspicuous station in the church, and a wider field of usefulness was opened to him. How faithfully, piously, and acceptably, he filled this station, and occupied this field, is witnessed by very many witnesses; particularly by the highly respectable testimonial, inserted at the close of the preface to this work, and by the tears of deep felt sorrow shed at his sudden decease, not only by his affectionate and beloved flock; but by thousands of others in

different parts of our country, who had either shared in the pleasure and benefit of his acquaintance and correspondence, been partakers of his liberal and affectionate hospitality, or enjoyed the fruits of his hearty and widely extended benevolence. The heart of no one, it is believed, was ever more uniformly and ardently set on doing good, than that of Dr. Keith. He was willing to spend and be spent in the service of God, and of his fellow men. In afflictions, by repeated bereavement of friends whom he loved as his own soul, and under trials of a very different nature, and still more wounding and perplexing to his pious heart, he exhibited a spirit of meekness, patience, and forbearance, highly becoming the christian character, and which plainly indicated that he had taken HIM for his pattern, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

In the establishment and subsequent measures of several benevolent, pious, and charitable Institutions, particularly a "Society for promoting the interests of religion," in 1802, and the "Charleston Bible Society," in 1810, Dr. Keith contributed liberally, both of his property and influence. He was ready to every good work; and seemed never weary in well doing.

Dr. Keith's Epistolary talents will be apparent to the readers of this volume. Letters to friends, written as were those in this volume, utter, more than any other writings, the feelings of the heart. These letters exhibit the writer, in the various characters of husband, brother, friend, comforter, and patriot, to peculiar advantage. Dr. Keith maintained, during his public life, the latter part of it especially, an extensive and voluminous

correspondence. His frequent visits to the Northern States for the benefit of his health, made him acquainted with a large portion of his ministerial brethren, besides many of the most respectable of the laity; and in consequence, the invalids of the North, when visiting the South, in quest of health, were, in great numbers, introduced to him, and received from him ever those kind attentions and christian consolations, which secured their affectionate esteem and grateful remembrance. Many of the most respectable people in the United States, and the most distinguished christians, were numbered among his friends.

Dr. Keith was the affectionate and provident husband, in succession, of three wives. The first, to whom he was married shortly after his removal to Charleston, was Miss Hannah Sproat, daughter of the pious and venerable Dr. Sproat, then senior pastor of Arch-Street church, in Philadelphia. She was, by her fervent piety and prayers, truly a helper and comforter of her husband, in his ministerial work and trials. This blessing, which he highly appreciated, he was permitted to enjoy but a few years. On the 13th of Sept. 1796, she departed this life in a triumphant faith, and in that christian hope, that is full of immortality.

His second wife, to whom he was married on the third of April, 1798, was Miss Catharine Legare, daughter of Thomas Legare, Esq. of Charleston, a lady held in high estimation for her various accomplishments, her piety and worth of character. In a letter to his brother, of May 1798, speaking of the event of his marriage, and of his wife, he says, "She is a very worthy branch, of a very worthy and respectable family, that has been eminent-

ly distinguished by the grace of God. Her great grandfather was driven by the violent hand of persecution, from France, during the reign of Louis the fourteenth. Her father, for a long course of years, has been ranked among the first here in christian knowledge and experience." With this beloved companion, he lived little more than five years. After suffering under a lingering and a slowly wasting disease, on the 15th of May, 1803, she finished her earthly course, enjoying in her last moments, "a solid, settled peace in believing; and in the morning of the Lord's day, entered upon her eternal sabbath, among the spirits of the just made perfect in the kingdom of their Redeemer" His last wife, was Miss Jane Huxham, a native of Exeter in England, who survives him as his widow; of whom, of course, delicacy forbids that we should say more, than that she deserved and shared largely in the affections of her husband, while he lived, and also, and still, in the esteem and cordial affections of his numerous and respectable friends.

Though Dr. Keith died without issue, he fulfilled the duties of a kind and liberal parent to several adopted children. On this subject, in a letter to a friend, of June 20th, 1803, in which he gives a particular account of his father's family, he says, "My brother John, like myself, has no children. May we have an interest in the new, sure, well ordered, and everlasting covenant of grace, and a name in the church and family of God, which will be better than any number, even of the most worthy and amiable of sons and daughters."

The excellent funeral discourse of the Rev. Dr. Flinn, which follows this sketch, in which the charac-

ter of this worthy and good man is eloquently and justly portrayed, renders it unnecessary here to add more on this topic. The following well written, and just notice of his death and character, which appeared at the time in the public papers, deserves, however, to be here preserved.

"Departed this life, on the 14th of December, 1813, the Rev. Isaac Stockton Keith, in the 59th year of his age. For upwards of 25 years he officiated as one of the pastors of the Independent church of this city; in which station he zealously promoted the cause of religion, and successfully promulgated the doctrine contained in Holy Writ, to the honor of that religion and himself, and the promotion of the eternal welfare and happiness of those, who were so favoured as to sit under his ministry. In manners he was mild, gentle and conciliating; in his disposition, charitable, humane and hospitable; his hands, his house, his heart, were ever open to suffering humanity; to be known in distress, in want, and worthy of relief, was a sufficient passport to his protection and assistance. While his mind was in a state of activity, which was till within a few hours of his dissolution, his lips were ever employed in the service, and for the promotion of the best happiness of mankind. In life, he was useful in an eminent degree; in death, he may be still so, if we but contemplate his virtues, and endeavour to imitate his goodness, and obey those precepts, which he recommended, and constantly enforced by his practice."

A

FUNERAL DISCOURSE,

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE

REV. ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, D.D.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE INDEPENDENT OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

DELIVERED IN THE CIRCULAR CHURCH, JAN. 4, 1814.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF THE CHARLESTON BIBLE SOCIETY.

BY REV. ANDREW FLINN, D.D.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CHARLESTON, S. C.

MONDAY, JANUARY, 10, 1814.

At a stated meeting of the Managers of the Bible Society of Charleston, at the house of GEN. C C. PINKNEY, *President.*

RESOLVED, that the thanks of this Board be presented to the Reverend Dr. Flinn, for his eloquent and appropriate Discourse, preached on the occasion of the death of the late Rev. Dr. Keith, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Bible Society; and also that the Rev Dr. Flinn, be requested to cause the same to be published.

(Extract from the Minutes)

T. FORD, Recording Secretary.

A

A FUNERAL DISCOURSE

COMMEMORATIVE OF

THE REV. ISAAC S. KEITH, D.D.

PSALM XII. 1.

HELP, LORD, FOR THE GODLY MAN CEASETH; FOR THE FAITHFUL FAIL FROM AMONG THE CHILDREN OF MEN.

THE mysterious dispensation of heaven, which has summoned us, this day, to the house of God, is of the most afflicting nature. It has shed a gloom upon the whole community: it has hung our temples with the emblems of mourning; has covered with sables, an extensive congregation, and filled with sorrow a thousand hearts. The stroke which has prostrated a stately pillar in the Lord's house, has awakened the sensibilities of our city. A great man has fallen in the Israel of God! An ambassador of Jesus Christ has been called home from among us! One of the Lord's ministers is dead! Our friend and brother is no more! No, "it is no illusion;" "the urn which bore" his ashes before us; the streams of anguish which followed; the sombre aspect of this bereaved temple; the "sad and sorrowful weeds" which cover this assembly; the tear of affliction, which has not yet ceased to flow, with united voice, though in mournful accents, which melt the soul, declare the painful truth, that our KEITH has gone down to the land of silence! Evidences of the mournful event, and of the universal feeling which

it has excited, every where present themselves. The tear which stole down the cheek of the venerable man of God, on that day when this bereaving stroke of heaven left him alone, to bear the pressure of this great people, spoke the sorrows of his heart. *Here* a very aged and venerable minister of grace, though belonging to another branch of the church, with a liberality that does him honor, exclaims, "I am near seventy years old, and I never knew a more excellent minister of Jesus Christ, of *any denomination*:" *there*, the statesman, and the Soldier, with a saddened countenance, testifies of him, "he was a *good man*, he deserved every mark of respect which can be showed to his memory." *Here*, I behold another venerable minister of Christ, stooping beneath the pressure of years; standing on the margin of the tomb, which has received the ashes of our departed brother, while the tear of affection rolls down his cheek, exclaiming, "long will the name of this great and good man be had in remembrance!" There weeps the humble African, who had been wont to sit at the feet of this excellent servant of Jesus Christ, to receive instruction, crying, "My shepherd is gone, my father is dead." *Here*, a whole congregation of the Lord's people, dumb with grief, and overwhelmed with sorrow, gathers round the altar where he used to minister, while their tears, and their sobs, speak the anguish of their souls. Yonder, disconsolate, and sorrowful, in the chamber of death, sits an afflicted widow, while she tells of the virtues of him, who "was a good husband; a true friend, and a faithful guide." What impressive evidences, *these*, of the universal affliction, which this bereavement has occasioned! How honorable to the living! How just to the dead!

Amidst this general mourning, of which all are partakers, the Bible Society of Charleston, formed for the purpose of giving a more extensive diffusion to the word of life, and of shedding upon the cheerless mansion of poverty, the light of salvation ; of which Society, the deceased was an active, zealous, and highly respected officer, cannot remain indifferent. Feeling its full proportion of sorrow, and "bearing its badges of wo," it presents itself before these altars to day, trembling under this awful stroke of the Almighty. In having commanded me to speak of departed worth, it has only made me the humble organ of giving expression to the anguish, which it feels, on this melancholy occasion. I approach the task assigned me with diffidence. Standing in the place where this minister of God has so often stood ; in presence of a bereaved and afflicted people, I feel able to do little more than lift up my voice, and weep. On such an occasion, and under such circumstances, the pathetic exclamation of the ancient church, which has been pronounced in your hearing, seems natural and proper. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth ; for the faithful fail from among the children of men !" In these words the Psalmist describes a character, and assumes a principle. The two leading features in the character described, are. godliness and faithfulness. The principle assumed seems to be this : that the removal by death, of men eminent for their piety and usefulness, is to the living a sore calamity.

In preparing the subject for an application suited to the afflicting circumstances, under which we are now assembled, I will follow this natural order of the text.

I. I will endeavour to present you with a just view of the character described, by illustrating the two prominent features of it, which are specified in the text; godliness and faithfulness.

II. I will establish the principle which the text assumes, viz. that the removal, by death, of men eminent for piety and usefulness, is, to the living, a sore calamity. This is the plan of our discourse. And now, may that Jesus, who sits as King upon the holy hill of Zion; who covers, with a cloud, the face of his throne; who has sorely afflicted us, and has given us "the wine of astonishment to drink," be with us on this occasion! May the light of his countenance gild the glooms, which have settled upon this assembly.

I. I am then, in the first place, to present you with a just view of the character here described, by illustrating the two prominent features of it, which are specified in the text; godliness and faithfulness.

These expressive terms have reference to, and embrace the duties enjoined, both by the first and second tables of the law. Godliness is a relative term, and is most extensive in its signification. It refers to God, and consists in being like him; in having the true fear of God in the heart, leading to purity and fervor in his worship.

It is, perhaps, impossible, as a celebrated divine justly observes, to bring within the scope of what is called a definition, an adequate idea of the term *godliness*. It is evident, from a declaration of St. Paul to Timothy, that it embraces the whole of practical religion: "godliness," says he, "is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which

is to come." Saurin reduces it to these four ideas, "knowledge in the mind, by which it is distinguished from the visions of the superstitious; rectitude in the conscience, by which it is distinguished from hypocrisy; self-denial in the life, by which it is distinguished from the unmeaning obedience of him who goes as a happy constitution leads him; and lastly, zeal in the heart, by which it is distinguished from the languishing emotions of the lukewarm."

If godliness consists in a conformity with the image, and obedience to the laws of God, which will not be questioned, it necessarily implies a saving knowledge of the divine character; a correct knowledge of his laws, and a hearty approbation of his statutes. No man can rationally conform to rules, of which he knows nothing; nor can he yield an acceptable obedience to laws, with which he is not acquainted, or which he does not approve. His obedience, in this case, even could it be made to meet the *letter* of the law, would be essentially deficient in *principle*; for God acknowledges no obedience, which does not flow from a principle of love. Now, since the sacred oracles are the great repository of divine truth, and are stamp'd with divine authority; since the image of God is there delineated; his laws and statutes there recorded, it follows, that godliness supposes a knowledge of the Holy Volume, together with a conformity of heart and life, to the doctrines, and precepts therein contained. It is thus that the godly man, deducing the rules of his duty, and the maxims of his life, from the fountain of truth, and the stores of divine knowledge, differs from the child of superstition, whose rules are visionary, and whose maxims are the fictions of a bewildered mind.

Sincerity of soul is another essential property of true godliness. The godly man, is a man of simplicity. To purify his heart from guile, is the great business of his life. No hypocritical professions of affection, which he never felt, or obedience, which he never yielded, are permitted to enter into his character. In simplicity of heart, and sincerity of soul, as in every other virtue, he feels bound to resemble God, who is infinitely sincere in all the professions which he makes, of affection for his creatures. The constant endeavour of the pious man is to act in such a way, as will enable him to carry his appeal, with Peter, to the omniscience of Jesus. "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." Afraid lest hypocrisy should lurk in his bosom, he sends up his cries to *Him*, who trieth the reins, "Search me, O God! and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

A third property of true godliness, is self-denial in the life; a steady opposition of soul to every evil propensity. The question with the pious man is not, what will be most agreeable to the current of the carnal heart? What will be most conducive to my worldly interest, or temporal honor? But what will be most pleasing to God, most agreeable to the revelation of his will, or most conducive to the honor of his name? Living "the life which he lives in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God;" pressing "towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus:" urging his passage on, in pursuit of "a better country," with "holiness to the Lord" as his motto, written upon the palm of his right hand, he willingly "denies all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and lives so-

berly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world." Finally, supreme love to God, and zeal for the honor of Emmanuel, burning in his heart, imparting light, life, and vigor to all his other virtues, crown the character of the godly man.

Born from above, created anew in Christ Jesus; having the principles of holiness implanted in his heart, and the features of the divine image retraced upon his soul; his mind stored with heavenly knowledge; warmed, and animated with sincere love to God, the pious man is found faithful in the discharge of his duty to men. This faithfulness displays itself in a proper attention to the *rights*, and to the *wants* of men. The *rights* of men, for I here use the word in its *proper* sense, are such as are founded upon the relations in which they are placed, as creatures of God, or as members of domestic, social, civil, or religious society. The *wants* of men, which the faithful servant of Jesus Christ regards, equally with their perfect rights, are such as are occasioned by the scanty possession, or painful bereavement, of the blessings of Providence, by the pains, and sicknesses, the agonies, sorrows and ills, "that flesh is heir to." To all the various classes, of which the great human family is composed, the servant of God feels that he sustains a particular, and important relation. The nature of this relation points him to his duty, in the conscientious discharge of which, his fidelity consists. The cardinal virtues of justice, charity and truth, shed their lustre round his character. Upon his heart is engraved the rule of life, which his Saviour has given; "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even the same to them." Influenced by this, he is just to the *property*, and to the *feelings* of others. He is the faithful guardian of his neigh-

bour's good name. He takes not up an ill report, nor does he give countenance to the base assassin of character. He is the faithful husband, the tender parent, the humane master, if God have placed him in those relations; the benevolent and obliging neighbour; the honest and useful citizen. United to the great original of goodness and love, by the holy dispositions he has received from on high; his heart warmed and expanded by the benign principles of love to God, he embraces, as his brethren, the whole human race. In him the stranger finds a friend; the widow, a husband; and the orphan, a father. He wipes the tear from the cheek of misery; sheds light, and joy through the mansion of poverty, and lights up a smile on the bed of pain. Having known, by experience, the truth and importance of the things of God, he is faithful to the eternal interests of men. While he relieves the temporal wants of the sinner, he administers also to the maladies of his soul. *Now* he remonstrates with the wicked man, while he tells him of the terrors of the Lord; and *now* he holds up the trembling penitent, while he tells him of the love of Jesus, and by pointing him to the blood of the covenant, assuages the sorrows of his bleeding heart. Having himself beheld, in the lively oracles, the light of salvation, and experienced the virtue of the streams which flowed from the cross, he anxiously endeavours to send this revelation from God, to those who are perishing "for lack of vision." This is the character described in the text; devoted to God, and faithful to man; bearing the glory of Jesus, and reflecting, in some degree, the lustre of the moral attributes of God. This is the man who sheds light, and diffuses blessings, upon all around him. While ad-

mitted to nearness and communion with God, he is an honor and a blessing to the land in which he lives. That the removal of such characters, by the stroke of death, is, both to the church, and to the world, a sore calamity, is a proposition evidently founded on the text. This brings us to the second general division of our subject, which requires us,

II. To establish the principle, assumed by the Psalmist, that the removal, by death, of men eminent for their piety and usefulness, is, to the living, a sore calamity. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

That the removal from our world, of such excellent characters is a sore calamity, will appear evident if we reflect, for a moment, upon the vast chasm which their death has occasioned in society. Men of such distinguished virtues fill up a large space. They are stars of superior magnitude. The lustre which they shed around them enlightens, cheers, and animates extensive regions. Under their benign influence, in a restricted sense, the deserts rejoice, and the solitary places are glad. But when stricken from their orbs, in an evil hour, by the resistless hand of death, what darkness ensues! How cheerless appear those regions, which before were flourishing as the garden of God! But a little while ago, benignant beams were seen to glitter on the glooms, which had settled in the chamber of affliction and death; but these beams are seen no more! A light was discovered in the mansion of sorrow, where "Poverty kept the door;" but this light has gone out! "The wintry blast, howls through the habitation," while deeper glooms, unpierced by a single ray, have thickened upon the deserted sufferer! Of what im-

mense importance to the comfort and well being of society, is the life of godly and faithful men! They are blessings to the world; but the extent of the blessing is seldom known till they are dead. How many are looking up to them for counsel, in the hour of perplexity; for consolation, in the day of adversity; for succour, in time of distress; for their prayers, in the tempestuous night of divine visitation!! But now, that they are gone, how many faces must gather paleness! how many hearts burst with anguish! how many chords are snapt asunder! what breaches are made in the happiness of all!

2. The removal, by death, of men eminent for piety and usefulness, is, to the living, a sore calamity, because the sum of virtue, with all the blessings which flow from that fruitful source, is thereby diminished. The real happiness of society will always bear a just proportion to the solid virtue which is found in it; and on the other hand, in the same proportion that vice triumphs, will the happiness, and glory of a people languish. Vice will always be kept down in proportion to the weight of virtue opposed to it. Whatever, therefore, diminishes the sum of virtue, gives a proportional spring to vice, with all the miseries which flow from it. In this sense it may be said that the death of every good man, however obscure, is a calamity to the living, because the sum of virtue, and consequently the sum of happiness, is thereby diminished. But when men of pre-eminent virtue and piety are taken away, how great is the deduction! how extensive the calamity!

3. The removal of men eminent for their piety and usefulness, is a sore affliction, because of the *too prob-*

able evidence, which it furnishes, of the divine displeasure; of the Lord's controversy with a sinful land; of the kindlings of his wrath, and of impending judgment. In this light does the prophet Isaiah seem to have viewed the removal of the righteous, in *his* day. "The righteous perisheth, says he, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." It was well said, in allusion to this declaration of the prophet, by a holy man, now with God; "Doves fly home to their windows at the coming storm." "When ambassadors are called home, it becomes the nation where they were, to reflect whether a rupture is not likely to ensue." Not for the purposes of their own salvation *merely*, are the godly and the faithful continued on earth. By their instrumentality does God call a guilty nation to repentance. By them does he warn, admonish, and intreat. By them does he negotiate the treaty of peace, with these revolted colonies of his vast dominions. This is more especially applicable to those who have been commissioned as heralds of salvation, to a guilty world. To them has been committed the ministry of reconciliation. They have been constituted ambassadors of the King of kings. They have been authorized to state the conditions of pardon, and to offer eternal life to the penitent. Clothed with divine authority; "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" "having taken for an helmet the hope of salvation;" fired with zeal for the honor of their Prince, they seize the standard of the cross; they wave the banners of their king, streaming with the blood of the covenant; they ascend the watch tower, they leap upon the walls of Zion; they cry in the streets of Jeru-

salem, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near." Panting for the consolation of Israel, fearing lest the blood of souls be found upon them, they "lift up their voice like a trumpet;" they "cry aloud, and spare not;" "they shout, they thunder, they shoot the arrows of the Almighty;" while "with strong crying and tears," they beseech the Lord to crown their labours with success. Constrained by the love of Jesus, they melt into tenderness; they point the impenitent to the agonies of the garden, and the streams of the cross. By all the arguments which the mysteries of redemption furnish, they urge sinners to "be reconciled to God." Ah, these are halcyon days! precious seasons! The mountains are dropping fatness, and the little hills are rejoicing! Now the Lord may be found, and salvation secured. Now he waits, with much long suffering, while these, his servants, are going forward with their work. But if these days of grace be neglected; if these ministers of mercy be disregarded; if the articles of the treaty, which they are sent to negotiate, be rejected, and the insulted sovereign recall his ambassadors, does it not seem as if the breaking forth of judgment was near at hand? Thus it was in the days of Noah. One hundred and twenty years did God wait upon the antediluvian sinners, while his ambassador was continued with them; but they refused to repent; they spurned his messenger, and despised his grace. He recalled his ambassador, and "lifted the flood-gates of vengeance!" Thus was it also in the days of Lot. The iniquities of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, had come to the full. They had despised the Lord's messenger, and misused

his prophet. He is about to destroy them by the most tremendous of his judgments; but not a cloud is permitted to gather over Sodom; no thunder is permitted to mutter, nor baleful lightning to gleam, till godly and faithful Lot is removed. *Then* the clouds gather, the tempest thickens, the thunders roll, the lightnings blaze, sulphureous torrents descend, and the smoke of Sodom goes up as the smoke of a furnace! Ah, my country! if the gathering home of the Lord's people, and the recalling of his ambassadors, in thick succession, are evidences of his controversy with thee, and the kindlings of his wrath against thee, it is now I tremble for thy destinies! How rapidly are these doves of Jesus gathering home to their windows! How are the ways of Zion mourning, and the paths which lead to Jerusalem becoming solitary! This leads me to remark in the

4th and last place, That the removal, by death, of men, eminent for their piety and usefulness, is a sore calamity, because the barriers, which prevent the torrents of vengeance from sweeping a guilty land, have thereby been weakened. Ah! what a barrier do the prayers of the righteous present to avert the floods of impending wrath! "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." Upon the prayers of his faithful ones, the Lord has placed the highest estimate. It was in a desperate case, that admitted of no remedy, that God pronounced the tremendous declaration, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; cast them out of my sight, and let them go." The declaration itself, implies the *almost* omnipotence of prayer.

"Let me alone," says God to an exalted favourite, wrestling with him for an idolatrous people, "let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them." How strong is this language! Even the arm of incensed Omnipotence, which wields the vengeful thunder, seems to be held in arrest!! The man of prayer prevails, and Israel is saved! "Therefore, says the Psalmist, he said he would destroy them, had not Moses, his chosen, stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath." What a shield do the prayers of the upright spread before a people, trembling at the approach of divine vengeance! "Let the earth be removed; let the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; let the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, and the mountains shake with the swellings thereof;" let nation rise against nation, and kingdom dash against kingdom; let the storm gather, and the tempest thicken; so long as I see Moses on his knees, wrestling in prayer, with Aaron and Hur supporting his arms; while I hear him cry, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach;" so long as I see Abraham on his face, urging his suit, that the righteous perish not with the wicked; so long as I hear Daniel, clothed with sackcloth, and covered with ashes, crying, "Let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, and thy holy Mountain," I will not be afraid. But, ah! when I see Moses ascending the heights of Nebo; when I see Abraham gathered to his fathers, and Daniel removed to the land of silence, "my flesh shivers," and my heart faints with me. When, from the watch tower, I behold the Almighty, "rising, to shake terribly the earth;" when I hear him "uttering his voice in

the Heavens," and commanding "scourge to follow scourge, and vengeance to press on vengeance," my soul meditates terror; I am ready to exclaim, in an agony of grief, *who* shall now stand up for us, and plead for the arrest of the destroying angel!

My brethren, the age in which we live, is an age darkened with the judgments of God. "A noise has come up to the ends of the earth: the Lord has a controversy with the nations, and is pleading with all flesh." He is deepening our afflictions, and increasing our alarms, by gathering home his people, and recalling his ambassadors. Of this melancholy truth, the funeral solemnities of this day furnish us with painful evidence. They tell us that a lamp has gone out in the sanctuary of God; that "a burning and shining light" has been extinguished in Israel; that a watchman has descended from the walls of Zion, to return no more for ever. Embosomed, as we are, in the darkness which has succeeded, and saddened by the long desolations which are spread around us, let us now approach the solitary mansion where, silent, and cold, lies the man of God, whose sudden departure from us has awakened our sympathies, and filled our hearts with sorrow. Let us cheer the glooms, as we pass to his tomb, by singing this song, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Ah, me! it is *now* I feel my entire inadequacy to the task, which you have devolved upon me. You have commanded me to lead you to that tomb; to lift the mantle of death; to pluck from the grave its covering, and to hold up before you this venerable servant of Jesus Christ, in the intrinsic excellence of his charac-

ter; but this would require powers equal to his own. In attempting to discharge this interesting duty, "too imposing to be declined," I shall endeavour cautiously to avoid, on the one hand, that fulsome adulation into which funeral eulogies are too apt to degenerate; and, on the other, that blind partiality, to which strong affection naturally leans. Standing, as I do, before "the remains of departed greatness," and in view of the judgment seat of Christ, I shall hold myself bound to speak the truth, so far as I know, or believe. And, indeed, why should I do otherwise? The character of my departed brother, needs no laboured effort of mine to preserve it; it is embalmed in the affections of a thousand hearts! His immortal part is not susceptible of flattery; it is before the throne, joining in praises of another order.

With the parentage, and early character of the Rev. Dr. Isaac Stockton Keith, I have not been able to make myself sufficiently acquainted, to do justice to this part of the subject before me; nor is it very important that I should. It matters but little from whom he was descended, or what favoured spot of country gave him birth. In general, I have learned, that he sprung from reputable parents, in the county of Bucks, in the State of Pennsylvania; and, that while in the pursuits of science, in the College of New Jersey, he was assailed by the terrors of the Lord, and brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. But it was not until after his Lord, having counted him faithful, had put him into the ministry, that he was introduced to our personal knowledge. With his "manner of coming in, and going out" among us, we have been long acquainted. As a *man*, as a *christian*, and as a *minister* of the

Lord Jesus, he has been known to us all; and we also know, that in each of these characters, he was deservedly *revered, respected*, and *beloved;* that he reflected honor upon his generation, adorned the doctrines of christianity, and was an ornament to the gospel ministry. As a *man*, formed for society, Dr. Keith was calculated both to receive and impart happiness in the social circle. In him shone that bright assemblage of dispositions and virtues, which never fail to constitute the agreeable and useful companion. Venerable and grave in his aspect, his presence forbade the rude approach of impertinence. To a stranger, his first appearance seemed rather distant and austere: but, upon a nearer approach, that stranger soon discovered his mistake; he soon found, that, though in the presence of dignity, it was dignity, softened and embellished with every benign and generous affection. Affable, but not assuming; cheerful, but not trifling; never descending from the dignity of the *man*, while his innocent anecdote lighted up a smile on every countenance around him; his company was sought and loved by his friends. Naturally warm and generous in his feelings, he loved his friend with an ardent affection. Had he a weakness? Perhaps it sometimes appeared *here*. Loving his friend with uncommon ardor, and placing upon the affection of that friend, in return, the highest estimate, he was sensibly alive to every suspicion of change in that affection. Perhaps this ardor of feeling might, sometimes, have led him to mistake *appearance* for reality. If you call this a weakness, it is one of those weaknesses which it is difficult to censure. On all the relations of life, in which he was placed, as a man and a citizen, he reflected honor. An affectionate

husband, a humane master, an obliging neighbour, and a distinguished philanthropist. His heart and his house were open to the stranger, and his *purse* to the *indigent*. He was a sincere lover of his country, and took a deep interest in her civil and political welfare; an interest, however, the expression of which was always chastened by a scrupulous regard to the sanctity of his office. Such, *you know*, was Dr. Keith, as a man. On all these excellent properties, the mildest beams of christianity shed their bright lustre.

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, this amiable man was *humble*, *watchful* and *devout*. On his private conversation, and retiring walk, was found the unction of the Holy One. The spirit of the gospel marked his intercourse with men. To the fervor of his devotions, his family and his closet, bore daily testimony. How affecting and impressive was the scene which sometimes unfolded to my view, when I have accidentally come upon him, at the time of the morning sacrifice! How have I seen this holy man of God on his knees, in the midst of his family, surrounded with his domestics, and the servants of his neighbours, who attended to receive the benefit of his prayers, with his eyes and his hands lifted before the mercy seat, his voice faltering, his whole system agitated, while he wrestled in prayer for himself, for his family, for his congregation, and for the land in which he lived! Ah! my country! bleeding and shaken by the judgments of the Almighty, these prayers for thy welfare have ceased for ever! "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

The personal piety of our departed brother, was not the sudden or transient flash, which appears for a mo-

ment, and then dies away. It was the steady fire, which burns with increasing fervor, and shines with increasing brightness. It influenced the whole of his deportment, and imparted character to all his transactions in life. Taught by this to sympathize in the concerns of others, he "rejoiced with those that did rejoice, and wept with those who wept." Himself a lover of Jesus Christ, he loved, and rejoiced in the prosperity of all who were so.

But it was from the walls of Zion that he shed the brightest glory of the gospel. Endowed with a mind which was strong, and discriminating; a judgment, solid and judicious; "apprehensions not remarkably quick, but unusually just;" the whole illuminated, and sanctified by divine grace, he was eminently qualified for being useful in the church. Thus fitted by his Lord, for the task assigned him, he was early commissioned as a herald of the cross. He commenced his ministerial career in the city of Alexandria, in the State of Virginia. There he laboured, with reputation and success, till he received a call to this congregation, to be a co-pastor with him who yet lives, and whose praise is in the churches. Here he laboured in word and doctrine for twenty-five years, when he was called to enter into the joys of his Lord. For one quarter of a century have this congregation and this city been blessed with his example, his prayers, and his labours in the ministry. During that period, through all the changes which it knew, he kept on, with a steady pace, in "works of faith, and labours of love." With tenderness he cherished the lambs, and with faithfulness fed the flock committed to his care. In the work of the ministry he was diligent, and laborious. Bearing

upon his mind a deep sense of the dread responsibility of his office, feeling that souls were committed to his charge; and that for these he was bound to watch, as one who must give an account, he made it his earnest study, and constant endeavour, so to divide the word of life, as to give to each one "a portion in due season." Rightly discriminating between the saint and the sinner; between the nominal christian, and the real believer, he shaped his instructions, admonitions, and warnings accordingly. Of his sermons, Jesus was the *center* and the *sum*. They were distinguished for their manly sense, simplicity of style, evangelical piety, and searching truth. Knowing that the great design of the gospel ministry is to bring sinners home to God, he was more solicitous to reach the conscience and to mend the heart, than to please the fancy, or to tickle the ear. He deemed that sermon worth nothing, which had not in it something of Christ. His theological opinions were, in the strictest sense of the word, orthodox. He stated, and defended the doctrines of grace, the doctrines of the reformation. He taught the entire depravity of the human heart; the absolute necessity of being born from above; the necessity of divine influences to change the heart, and to sanctify the soul; the nature, and necessity of repentance and faith, holiness and love, influencing the heart to the production of good works, in the life.

The divinity of the Lord Jesus, and atonement through his blood, were, in his system, doctrines of *primary* importance. On these he rested his eternal hopes. In his public ministry, Dr. Keith was particularly distinguished, not only for the purity of his doctrines, but for the fervor of his prayers, and his marked

attention to the dispensations of Providence. In these he has, perhaps, been seldom surpassed in any age of the church. How often has he wrestled, like Jacob, on this *very spot!* The pestilence, the fire, the earthquake, or the storm, were never suffered to escape his public notice. But why dwell upon the subject of his pastoral office, in presence of his bereaved and afflicted congregation, whose hearts are still bleeding, whose tears are still flowing, and who are sorrowing, most of all, because of the decree that is gone forth that "they shall see his face no more?" How he fed you, with the bread of life; how he comforted you in the hour of affliction; how he wiped your tears, in the day of your anguish; how "he prayed by your beds of pain;" how affectionately he loved you, and how honestly he warned you, is known to *you* now, and shall be known to the *universe*, in that day, which shall disclose the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven! *Then* shall you again meet your pastor! Those who shall have savingly profited by his ministry, shall hail, with loud acclamations, the man who was "over them in the Lord;" who fed them in this house, and pointed them to the Saviour. But those who shall then be found to have rejected his ministry; but I forbear! The subject is too awful! Your loss, my brethren, is great, and sensibly you feel it; but you have yet much for which to be thankful. Behold the venerable man who is still with you! He will comfort you in this time of your trouble; and you in return will comfort him. See him trembling beneath the pressure of this great people! He is left alone, solitary and disconsolate! You will hold up his arms, as Aaron and Hur did those of Moses.

But in this assembly I see a group of mourners, whose tears tell me that *they* too are filled with sorrow.

Ask them why they weep, and they point me to the seat which the man of God filled among them, now left vacant. To these my disconsolate brethren, I must be permitted to turn for a moment.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND

GENTLEMEN OF THE CHARLESTON BIBLE SOCIETY,

Ah, why have you already disarmed me! I see you weep! I know full well the cause of those tears! Your ranks are thinned! Your number is diminished! One of your much loved leaders has fallen; and therefore it is that you lift up your voice, in this temple, and cry, "help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth." But let us not be filled with over-much sorrow. Let us wipe away our tears, and gather round the ashes of our departed brother, and prove how much we loved him, by "gathering up his maxims," and following his bright example. His greatest eulogy, as a member of this body, is found in the excellence of the Institution itself. Perhaps it is not going too far to say, that no institution ever originated in human invention, that has been so extensively useful to the eternal interests of men, as the institution of Bible Societies. Never have the streams of salvation rolled on with such rapidity, and with such growing swell, as since the institution of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This was the fountain whence first issued those streams which, as the river of God, are now refreshing and fertilizing the wilderness, and the dark places of the earth, stretching almost to the remotest boundaries of the globe, where, for ages, have been "the habitations of cruelty." Never have the missionary armies gone out with such triumphant banners, as since the commencement of that society, and those which have grown out of it. All

Christendom seems to have been put in motion. Many are running "to and fro," and the knowledge of the Lord is rapidly increasing. The light of Zion is streaming in its glory, and the darkness of Paganism is flying before it. The Indian, the Persian, and the Arabian, with the inhabitant "of Burmah and China," are now enabled to read, each in his own language, the words of eternal life. Mount Caucasus, in the bosom of Asia, has become luminous with the light of truth, and is pouring the lustre of the gospel upon "numerous nations of the Tartar race." "The Malyan Isles," and those of the Pacific Ocean, have become vocal with songs of redemption through the blood of the Cross. "The great Continent of Africa is now the scene of translations and of missions." The Continent of North America, and that of the South, are sending to the nations the knowledge of the Saviour. "Greenland, Labrador, and Austral Asia, have received the precious gift." Jesus has taken to him his great power, and is building up Jerusalem in these troublous times. These amazing operations, which are fixing the attention of Europe and the world; and, in their results, are pouring blessings immortal upon the dark regions of the earth, soon caught the inquisitive and attentive ear of our departed brother. Having himself tasted that "the Lord is gracious," he hailed, with rapture, the introduction of the time, when "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." He longed to be engaged in so good a cause; and before the time had arrived which gave birth to this Institution among us, he was engaged, with others, in counsel, and pecuniary support to aid in furthering the interests of missions, and translations in the East.

When the time drew on which presented a favourable aspect towards the good work in this city, he was among the foremost to embrace it. His arms, and his house were opened. He gathered round him the ministers of the altar, who, in union with himself, drew up the Constitution and Rules, which bind us together. Of this Society, thus organized, he was chosen one of the Vice-Presidents. This office he filled with dignity, activity and zeal, until the evening of Tuesday, the 14th ult. when he fell asleep in Jesus! On Monday the 13th, at the last monthly meeting of the Board of Managers, he zealously advocated, and successfully supported the measure proposed, the object of which was to send the Scriptures, in their native language, to the destitute French, in the state of Louisiana; and in thirty hours he was called to sit down with Abraham on the Mount of God! In the silent mansion of the tomb, his "flesh rests in hope," after having served his generation fifty-eight years and eleven months. And now farewell, thou man of God! We will dry up our tears, and return to our work, waiting with patience till our Lord shall come!

"Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy: to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. AMEN."

SERMON.*

MARK xvi. 15.

AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE.

"GOD, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers, by the prophets," was pleased, under the last dispensation of his grace, to speak unto the world by his Son. To him, indeed, before his appearance, all the prophets gave witness, and were raised up by God, for this very purpose, to foretel the coming of the Messiah, whom God had promised from the earliest times; and by preaching the doctrine of repentance, gradually to prepare the world to receive him as the infallible Teacher, and only Saviour of men. Of him Moses spake, when he said to the fathers, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you." And the salvation which he was to bring to the world, was, to those who prophesied of it, a subject of *their own* careful and delightful inquiry. For of this salvation, as we are told by the apostle Peter,† the prophets have inquired and searched diligently

* This sermon, now published for the first time, was preached by Dr. Keith, Nov. 30, 1788, the Lord's day after his inauguration, as one of the co-pastors of the Congregational, or Independent Church, in Charleston, South Carolina.

† 1 Ep. i. 10.

who prophesied of the grace which should come unto you; "searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." So that unto the people of former ages, and under the old dispensation, was the gospel preached by the ministry of the prophets.

But the revelation of this blessed system of religion, or dispensation of divine grace, which was made to them, and by them communicated to the people, to whom they were sent, was extremely defective and obscure, compared with the fuller measure, and brighter glory, with which it was published by Christ himself, when in the fulness of time, he appeared in the world as the Author and finisher of our faith, as well as of the eternal redemption of all who obey him. Blessed were the eyes of those who saw, and the ears of those who heard with faith, this divine Instructor, when, in the days of his personal ministry, he "went about all the cities and villages of Judea, teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom of grace." These were the things which many prophets and righteous men of earlier ages desired to see and hear, but did not see and hear them.

Yet the divine plan of that salvation, of which he was the Author, and which was revealed by him with so much brighter evidence and glory, than the world had ever before beheld, was still only begun to be spoken by our Lord. His abode on earth was of short duration; and his public personal ministry, was soon terminated, by the death to which, according to the divine councils, he was delivered up, and which formed an essential and

principal part of the scheme of our redemption. And having thus, in the appointed way, finished the work which was given him to do, he was then, as the due reward of his services, received up into Heaven, to sit at the right hand of God the Father, whom he had so eminently glorified on earth, and to possess forever, the glory which he had enjoyed with the Father before the world was.

But that the knowledge and the blessings of the redemption, thus accomplished, might be effectually diffused among mankind, he was pleased, before his ascension to his glorified state, to institute the ordinance of the gospel ministry, and to commit to chosen men, the office of publishing fully and extensively to the world, the great salvation, which began to be spoken by himself. This important commission, as it was first delivered to his chosen Apostles, (together with the implied power of delegating to others, duly qualified, the same great trust) we have recorded in the words before us.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Before this period, as our Saviour's own ministry had been chiefly confined to the land of Judea, so when he had at any time sent forth his disciples to preach his gospel, it was only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; for they were forbidden to go into the way of the Gentiles, or into any city of the Samaritans. But now, the time being come, when he who was the glory of the people of Israel, might also be made known with every advantage, as a light to lighten the Gentiles; they were furnished with a new commission, or with powers vastly enlarged beyond those which had been formerly given

them. They were authorized to *go into all the world*, to travel into all quarters of the habitable earth, *and preach the gospel of Christ to every creature;* to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews, to every creature of the human human race capable of receiving it. Accordingly we find, that in obedience to their Lord's command, they went forth and preached every where, "the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." Such were their diligence and success, in the execution of their office, that the vast spread, and amazing progress of the gospel, published by them, are represented by an angel flying through the midst of heaven, and preaching the everlasting gospel to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

That the blessings of this divine religion, might not only be diffused far and wide among that generation, but be transmitted to all future generations of men; the same commission, which was originally given to the Apostles, included in it the authority or power, which they accordingly exercised, of ordaining others, to assist them in carrying on effectually the great and benevolent design of their own appointment: and to them, and their regular and faithful successors, was that special and most encouraging promise of our Lord made, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Hence it is at that you of this day, are favoured with the privilege of *hearing* the gospel, and that to us, your servants for Jesus sake, is committed the sacred office of *preaching* it to all who will attend our ministrations.

But what is to be understood by *preaching the gospel?* This I shall endeavour to shew in a few instances;

and then suggest a reflection or two for the improvement of the subject; and conclude the whole with a short Address to you, suited to the occasion of my entering upon the exercise of my ministry among you.

What is to be understood by preaching the gospel?

1. That we carefully teach, and inculcate the great and important truths, the pure and distinguishing doctrines of the Christian religion. The gospel, in its most usual and proper sense, signifies that eminent discovery, which God has made of his mercy and grace, through his Son Jesus Christ, to fallen man. With peculiar propriety, therefore, is it expressed in the original language of the New Testament, by a word which signifies *Good News*. Now by the doctrines of this dispensation of grace, we are taught to consider mankind, as by nature, in a state of alienation from God; deeply depraved, averse to holiness, and prone to sin; and by sin exposed to innumerable afflictions in this life, to the penalty of death, and the miseries of an everlasting hell: that in this situation, God so pitied and loved the human race, as to send his only begotten Son into the world, in the character of a Saviour, that whosoever should believe in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life: that in concurrence with this benevolent design, the Son of God consented, and condescended to become man, by assuming our nature into a personal union with his own divinity; and after yielding, in this assumed nature, a perfect obedience to the divine law, which man had broken, to be delivered up for us all, to the death of the cross, in order to make atonement for the sinner's guilt by his blood, or "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." That to become partakers of this salvation, we must believe

in Christ, repent of our sins, and obey his laws. That, seeing we are not of ourselves able to comply with these terms, the same Jesus, who once made his soul an offering for sin, is now exalted, "a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins;" and by his Spirit, who is promised and sent down into the world, to those who will receive him; renews and sanctifies the hearts of men, and forms them to the love of God and man, and to the practice of that universal holiness, which becomes the gospel of Christ; and that from the throne of his glory, to which he is now exalted, as Head over all things to his church, and on which he sits as a Priest, interceding for his people, and dispensing the gifts, the graces, and the blessings which he purchased for them with his blood; he shall, at the appointed time, come again in the character of a Judge, "taking vengeance on those who obey not the gospel," but to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe; and to receive his faithful followers to the full possession of the unspeakable glories, and joys of his everlasting kingdom.

Such, I conceive, to be the substance of the gospel. These are the blessed doctrines of grace, which distinguish and exalt Christianity above any system of religion, suggested by the light of nature, or framed by the reason of man. In preaching the gospel, therefore, it becomes us to remember, that these are the doctrines, which as ministers of Christ, we are called to publish to the world, even the doctrines which God has revealed by his Son, and which teach us what Christ has done for man, and how man must through him be saved.

It is this gospel that exhibits human nature, in consequence of the fall of Adam, as lying low in ruins, deep-

ly involved in guilt and misery : that illustriously displays the grace and the glory of our God and Saviour, in the contrivance and accomplishment of our redemption, by Jesus Christ, who was once crucified for the sins of men, but is now highly exalted, and crowned with all the glory and honors becoming the Redeemer, the Lord and the Judge of the world : that teaches us to seek the salvation of our souls, and acceptance with God, only through faith in him, inasmuch as there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby any can be saved : that requires us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world, as it becomes those for whom he gave himself, that he might by his blood redeem them from all iniquity, and by his Spirit purify them unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works : that enforces the practice of every duty and virtue, by the most solemn and interesting motives, drawn from the authority, the love, and mercy of our Maker and Redeemer; from the awful terrors of his law, and the alluring promises of his grace ; from the regards which we owe to ourselves and our fellow-men, in this world ; and from the hope of that heaven of inconceivable happiness, which awaits the good, and the fear of that hell of unspeakable misery, prepared for the wicked, in the world to come.—It is this gospel, which our Lord commanded to be preached to all the world, and which, in the Apostles' days, proved so mighty through God, to the pulling down the strong holds of Satan in the hearts of men, and was instrumental of so gloriously establishing and enlarging his kingdom in the world. It is this gospel, which in every succeeding age, has been prospered to the same desirable ends. It is this gospel, which must be still preached by all who

minister in the name, and in the church of Christ, as they would desire and hope to see their ministrations, succeeded by his blessing in the promotion of those great objects, which this divine religion is so admirably fitted, and so specially designed, to advance.

2. In preaching the gospel, it concerns us, with all prudence and fidelity, to divide aright the word of truth, and give to the respective classes of our hearers, their proper portion in due season. It is not sufficient to preach the doctrines, the precepts, the promises, and the threatenings of the gospel, in one general view, as if these were all equally addressed to all men; but that these may produce their proper, and full effect, it is requisite to direct the application of them, more especially and pointedly to the different characters and conditions of our hearers, to which they are especially adapted. In this way alone, can we reasonably promise ourselves much success in our attempts to convince, or persuade, to minister reproof or consolation. In order to attain these objects in any considerable degree, we must consider carefully, and endeavour to distinguish wisely, a variety of different circumstances in the conduct, and the situation of those whom we address, and to accommodate ourselves to these, in such a manner, as that every one's conscience may perceive at once where the discourse is pointed, and be led to apply it accordingly, for instruction, correction, or comfort. I cannot now take notice of any of the more particular distinctions in the characters and circumstances of men, which call for an attentive and skilful management of our public and private addresses; but I shall take leave to observe, that there is one general and more important distinction of characters, which we should

never lose sight of ourselves, and to which it becomes us to keep the attention of our hearers, ever directed: I mean the essential and vast difference between a sincere Christian, and an impenitent sinner; between one who is in a state of corrupt nature, unrenewed, and unsanctified; and one whose heart is purified by faith in Christ, and whose life is adorned with the beauties and the fruits of holiness; between one who is only born of the flesh, and is a child of wrath; and one who is born again of the Spirit, and is become a child of God, a member of Christ, and an heir of heaven. The nature, the importance of this distinction of characters; the absolute necessity, the happy fruits and consequences of this effectual change of the heart and the life; the miserable situation of those who have not experienced it; the certain condemnation under which they now abide; and the awful judgment and doom hereafter awaiting them, if they fly not to the hope set before them in the gospel; these should be often inculcated, and fervently impressed upon the conscience, as we would hope, that the gospel may be made an instrument, in the hand of God, to open the eyes of men, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Thus plainly laying before men the declarations of the word of God, concerning their respective states and characters, and rightly dividing to them the word of truth, in which they are particularly and most deeply interested, we shall approve ourselves faithful and wise stewards in the household of God, or church of Christ; and have ground to hope, that the word thus faithfully

and judiciously dispensed, will be accompanied with his efficacious blessing, and thereby rendered truly and eminently profitable to our hearers.

3. In preaching the gospel, it is required of us, that we make the glory of God, in the salvation of men, the great end to which our ministrations, and our aims are habitually directed. We must seek, not our own glory, but the glory of him who sent us; we must labour to promote, not our own temporal interests, but the eternal interests of those to whom we are sent. We must remember that we are ambassadors for Christ, appointed to entreat and persuade you in Christ's stead, and as though God did beseech you by us, to be reconciled to God. This is our proper business; this is the great and good end of the pastoral office which we hold; and he who loses sight of this, or proposes to himself any end that is not subservient to, or consistent with this, whatever applause, or advantages he may secure to himself from his fellow-men, he cannot be styled a true preacher of the gospel, nor receive the final reward of the good and faithful servant of Christ.

4. In preaching the gospel, it must be the study and endeavour of its ministers, to recommend it to the esteem and practice of others, by their own example.

So important and powerful is the influence of example, to enforce instruction on every subject of a practical nature, that it is considered as a certain truth, established by long observation and experience, and has therefore become proverbial, that "example teaches more than precept." In common life, every one knows how much more easily and speedily we learn to transact any business, by seeing it done, than by being merely informed, though ever so particularly and fully, how

it ought to be done. The case is the same in matters of religion. The most just and pleasing delineations of the principles and duties of Christianity, will usually be found to have but a small and slow effect, in forming persons to a correspondent practice, compared with the living character of the Christian, exhibited in the temper and conduct of those who profess the religion of Christ; and especially of those who are called, and who undertake to preach it to others. Those sublime virtues and graces of Christianity, which, when properly represented in description, cannot fail to appear to be in themselves, truly excellent and desirable, are at the same time too commonly considered as impracticable, and unattainable to the generality of mankind. But when they see them actually exemplified by men like themselves, and in the same condition with themselves, they no longer despair of reaching the attainments, which they see others have made before them; and their emulation, resolution, and endeavours, are awakened to go and do likewise, to imitate the pattern set before them.

This was one reason why our blessed Lord, the author and finisher of our faith, when he came into the world to fulfil, among other offices of a Saviour, that of a Teacher of the will of God, and the duty of man, condescended to be made in the likeness of men, and to become like to his brethren in all things, that in our nature, he might present us with a visible and familiar example of what we ought to be and to do; so that to comply with the doctrines which he taught, and the laws which he prescribed, we might have only to follow his steps, and to walk as he also walked. For this purpose, also, it pleased the only wise God, our Sa-

viour, to commit the dispensation and ministry of the gospel, not to angels, but to men, possessed of the same nature, powers, and passions with other men, that by exemplifying in their own conduct, the religion which they preached, they might shew it to be as practicable, as it is divine and amiable. Hence we find St. Paul, often charging and entreating his converts in such language as this: "Be followers of me, even as I am of Christ." "Mark those who walk so, as ye have us for an example." And again, "Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do.* And on this principle, he earnestly recommends it to Timothy. "Be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Take heed unto thyself, and to thy doctrine; continue in Christ, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and those that hear thee."†

Thus to take heed to ourselves, that our own conduct may in all respects, correspond to our doctrine, that we may be not only blameless, and harmless, and without rebuke, so as to give no offence to Jews or Gentiles; to believers of different sentiments, or names; to those who are strong or weak in the faith; to the friends or the enemies of our religion; but to shine among all as the lights of the world, and be examples in all things to the flock committed to our care; and by our good works engage those who behold them, to glorify our Father who is in heaven, in their cordial reception of, and obedience to, the gospel of his Son, which we preach: this is certainly one of the most difficult, as it is one of the most important, parts of our

* 1 Cor. xi. 1; Phil. iii. 17;—iv. 9. † 1 Tim. iv.

sacred work. This calls for all the wisdom of the serpent, united with all the innocence of the dove. This requires the utmost circumspection and diligence, in every duty of our profession and office, that we may neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, or in the ministry of the gospel with which he hath entrusted us, for the purpose of winning the souls of others to him, and to his salvation.

May the gracious Master whom we serve, compassionate and forgive the many infirmities and failings of those, whom he hath employed in this difficult service, and by his Spirit, form them more and more, to that heavenly mind, which was in himself; and conform them more perfectly and fully to that bright example, which he has left in every thing, that is most excellent and praiseworthy; so that while adorning in all things the doctrine of God, their Saviour, they may, with peculiar propriety and persuasive force, call upon all to whom they preach the gospel, to be followers of them, as they are of Christ.

REFLECTIONS.

1. From the review of what has now been said on this subject, it will appear how important, and at the same time how arduous, is the work to which the ministers of the gospel are called. It is truly, as St. Paul observes to Timothy, a *good work*.* It is a work, whose great object, is to carry on the same design of eternal love and mercy to mankind, for which the Son of God became man, and lived and died in our

* 1 Tim. iii. 1.

nature; even the recovering of the race of men from the ruins of their fallen condition, to the blessings of that life, which man originally enjoyed in the favour of his Maker, and the conducting of many sons and daughters, who become the children of God through faith in Christ, in the highway of holiness, to the glory of his everlasting kingdom; to that blessed life and immortality, which our Saviour has brought to light through his gospel.

But in proportion to the important nature, and the most benevolent design of the gospel ministry, are the labours and the difficulties attending the faithful execution of it. When those who are called to this service, consider the necessity that is laid upon them to preach the pure, and the whole gospel; and no other doctrines, than those of the genuine gospel of Christ; the prudence and fidelity required of them, in dividing aright the word of truth, and giving to each their portion in due season, in order to warn the wicked, awaken the secure, shake the false hope of the hypocrite, establish the weak believer, and pour the oil of joy into the disconsolate hearts of mourners in Zion;—the upright motives by which they are to be actuated, and the great ends which they are ever to keep in view, not the applause of men, or the gain of the world, but the glory of God, and the eternal interests of mankind;—and the bright example of piety, righteousness, and goodness, and of every Christian grace and virtue, by which they are to adorn and recommend the religion which they preach: when they consider the unspeakable worth of the souls committed to their care, and the various opposition with which they have to contend, in their attempts to win them over to Christ and salvation, and to lead them on in the ways of God, and their duty; from the

passions and prejudices of men, from the charms, and the terrors of the world, when it smiles or frowns upon them, and from the temptations, and the arts of the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, and still labours to seduce and pervert the faithful from the course of their obedience; and when they take into view the solemn, and particular account which they must give at the last day, to the great Head of the church, even the Lord Jesus Christ, their Master and their Judge of the ministry, and of the souls with which he has entrusted them:—When they seriously and attentively weigh these things, well may they, from a consciousness of their own weakness, and deficiencies, and under an affecting sense of the arduous and interesting nature of their work and charge, feel themselves constrained to say, in the language of St. Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?"—In themselves, they are, indeed, utterly insufficient for them: but this is their encouragement, and it is fully equal to their utmost necessities and wishes, that their sufficiency is of God, and that their Lord has promised them his constant presence and assistance, that through Him strengthening them they can do all things which he requires of them in his service; and that when He who is the chief Shepherd, shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory, which fadeth not away, and that shall eminently exalt and distinguish those, who have turned many to righteousness, or whose labours, to that end, have been uniformly employed with becoming zeal and fidelity. Happy indeed, happy beyond expression, is the minister of Christ, who obtains mercy of the Lord, to be faithful to his sacred and important trust, and through whose instrumentality, many are added to

that number which shall be saved; and to whom he can address himself, in the animated language of the Apostle, and say,—"What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

2. What has been said, may serve to instruct those who are hearers of the word, what sort of preaching they are to expect of their ministers, and ought chiefly to desire and value. If the pure doctrines of the gospel, in their simplicity, are to be the subjects of our sermons, it follows that you should neither expect, nor desire any other; nor suppose that the want of these, can ever be supplied by any philosophical speculations, or flowers of human eloquence; or, as the Apostle expresses it, with any "enticing words of man's wisdom." It is not the declaring of the testimony of God, with the excellency of speech, or of the wisdom of this world; but the preaching of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, that alone can prove effectual, through the blessing of God, to save your souls. And as you would wish to experience, in this way, the saving efficacy of such doctrine, while you give us the pleasure and encouragement of your attendance on our ministrations, and of a candid hearing of the word dispensed by us, let us be favoured, at the same time, with the assistance of your prayers; that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ; and that the preaching of Christ crucified, which has been to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, may be to you the power of God, and the wisdom of God, for your salvation. And further, let your fervent prayers be offered up to the Lord, that his word may have free course, and be glorified,

not only with you, but among all men; that the gospel may be preached to every creature of the human race, and that all who hear its joyful sound, may believe its divine doctrines, and be saved.

You have heard something of the nature of the gospel, and of the manner in which it is to be preached; and as the preaching of this gospel forms an eminent part of the sacred service, in which I have been called, and am now received, to be employed as one of your ministers. I shall take leave to conclude this discourse, with a short Address to you, suited to the occasion of my entering upon the exercise of my ministry among you.

On an occasion so important, as that of my taking upon me my part in the pastoral charge of your souls, a variety of interesting thoughts, will naturally arise in the reflecting mind; and much more might be easily and pertinently said on the subject, than I shall at present attempt. Without a few words, however, I might appear to be scarcely just to myself, and should certainly be wanting in the respect due to you.

The honor which I conceive was conferred upon me, by the *call* which you were pleased to address to me, I acknowledge with the sensibility of a very grateful heart. The terms in which it was dictated, I then considered, and some experience has since given me additional cause to consider, as the language of sincerity, and happily expressive of that spirit of Christian piety, friendship, and affection, which a minister of Christ must ever wish and rejoice to find in the people whom he is called to serve in the gospel. The best return that I can make for all the testimonies and expressions of your favourable sentiments, and kind regards, which

have been already bestowed upon me, or which I may yet hope to experience, from a people, whose friendly and affectionate conduct towards their ministers, has been long honourably distinguished, will be, to devote myself with a zealous and affectionate heart, to the service of your souls, in the advancement of your spiritual and eternal interests and happiness. And I trust and hope, that I shall not be found altogether wanting in that Christian and cordial love, and attachment to you, which will dispose and lead me, in this way, very gladly to spend and be spent for you.

Many deficiencies, I am sensible, you will discern in the exercise of my ministry, as well as in other instances. From a consciousness of these, it was not without much difficulty, that my own consent was obtained, to take part in the pastoral care of so large and important a branch of the Christian Church. To this, however, I was encouraged, primarily by the promises of the Great Head of the Church, that he will always be with his ministers, whenever and wherever they are employed by his Providence, and that he will not require more than he has given, but graciously accept them, according to what they have to offer, or are able to do, in his service. In subordination to this divine encouragement, was that derived from the persuasion, of my finding with you that candor and indulgence, which would lead you kindly to overlook, or bear with, my infirmities, and benevolently to accept my well meant endeavours to serve you; and from the consideration, that I was not to be engaged alone in the arduous undertaking; but to be associated with one, whose worthy character and useful labours, have justly acquired him that approbation, esteem and influence,

which he happily enjoys with you, and from whose friendly and good offices, in various ways, I promised myself many advantages.

With him, under whose ministrations you have already enjoyed several happy, and I hope, not unprofitable years; it is my earnest wish, it is my sincere resolution, and I trust, through grace, it will be my constant endeavour, to maintain the most cordial harmony, in carrying on the great design of our common ministry. And to every proper measure that may be used by us, to cultivate a friendly and affectionate union, and to encourage each others hearts, and strengthen each others hands in this great and good work. I am persuaded you will always add every countenance and aid, which you can give. Your fervent prayers, it is hoped, will ever be united with our own, that we may be ever animated as by one soul, that we may always speak the truth in love, as with one mouth; and that we may constantly and uniformly aim, and with abundant success, at the same great object, the glory of God, in your salvation. And whatever different powers, gifts, or qualifications, we may possess, you will not, on this account, we trust, ever think of declaring yourselves one for Paul, and another for Apollos; but still consider us as instruments only of a different form, used by the same God of all grace, and employed by the one only Head of the Church, in the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body, or the Church of Christ; and whether we plant or water, prove instrumental to the conversion of sinners, or to the edification of believers, you will consider God alone as the Author of all the fruits or suc-

cesses of our respective services, and give Him the praise who giveth the increase.

The pastoral relation in which I am now united with you, I consider as one of the most important and tender, that can take place between men on earth; and conformably to the very interesting nature of the connexion, I trust, my heart will ever feel the tenderest interest in your concerns. For your prosperity, and especially that your souls may be in health, and prosper in the divine life, I shall ever fervently pray, and in all your afflictions and distresses, whether as a Society or as individuals, I shall ever be ready to bear a sympathetic part. In the God of your salvation, in whose favour is your life, and whose loving kindness is better than life, may you find that joy, in which I would always wish to rejoice with you, and the consolation, which you may need under all those sorrows in which I may be called to weep with you, may you also find in the same God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who alone is able, and who will be found always ready to comfort you, if you are not wanting to yourselves, in all your tribulations.

The ministry received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify the gospel of the grace of God, which I have now begun to exercise among you, it will, I trust, be my aim so to fulfil, through the whole course of it, whether that may be long or short, that I may finish it with joy.—May I obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful in the discharge of it, so that when it comes to be concluded among you, I may be able, in the language of St. Paul, to take you to record, that "I am pure from the blood of all men," having not shunned

to declare unto you the whole counsel of God, nor kept back any thing that appeared to be profitable to you; and uniformly inculcating, as the scope and tendency of all my preaching, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. By your receiving the truth, thus preached, in the love of it, and with cordial obedience to it, let me entreat you, to afford me the best encouragement which you can give in this difficult work; and to bestow upon me the greatest honor and happiness, to which I can aspire among you, even that of cherishing the hope, the pleasing the animating hope, that if I should be so successful as to save my own soul, I may also rejoice in the day Christ, that I have not laboured in vain among you, but have been in some measure instrumental to your salvation.

Before I conclude, I cannot forbear expressing the pleasure which I feel, and my affectionate congratulations, with a word of exhortation to you, on account of the prosperous circumstances in which I find your Society at the present day, and the pleasing prospects which seem to be opened before you for the time to come.

The increasing numbers, and growing strength of your Church, and the successful exertions which you have made under the many disadvantages in which you were involved by the calamities of an eventful, and to you of this place in particular, a most distressful war: to repair the ruins of your ancient house of worship, and to complete the new building for the public service of God, which you have raised, and the comfortable provision which you have made for the support of the ordinances of the gospel in them, are circumstances highly honorable and favorable to you. Not

unto yourselves, however, not unto yourselves, but unto God, to whose kind and bountiful Providence you are so deeply indebted, let all the praise be ascribed, for his truth and his mercy's sake.

Be not weary in well doing, but let your zeal be still unremittingly employed, in the same good cause of your church and your religion, on those worthy motives, and with those exalted views, which Christianity inspires; and in this way encourage your hope, that he who has put it into your heart to do so much for the honor of his name, will remember your works and labours of piety and love, and will cause you to see more and more of the good of his chosen, and to rejoice and glory with encreasing joy and triumph, in the gladness and prosperity of his church and inheritance.* That he will abundantly bless the provisions of his grace, dispensed to you in the house which you have builded to his name, and add many to the number that shall here be fed with the bread of life.

And as you would desire and hope that he would thus befriend and bless you, be careful that your hearts may ever remain united, in a sincere Christian friendship for each other, and that your mutual endeavours be employed in love, to serve one another, and to promote the common interests of the whole body, of which you are members. This spirit of amity and concord, so congenial to the gospel, so well becoming a Christian society, will, in the nature of things, eminently contribute to the stability and growth of your church, and the advancement of your religious edification and comfort; and it will most certainly secure to you the divine pres-

* Psalm 186.

ence and favour, on which all your prosperity, temporal and spiritual, ultimately depends. Be ye therefore of one mind, having the same love, be of one accord and live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

To the grace of God I commend you, fervently praying that the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, may make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you in the faith, the practice, the comforts, and the hopes of the gospel, on earth; and finally receive you to dwell forever with the spirits of just men, made perfect, and with the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; that you may serve him day and night, in complete holiness and fulness of joy, in his temple there.

And now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. AMEN.

NATIONAL AFFLICTION, AND NATIONAL CONSOLATION.

A SERMON,

ON THE DEATH OF

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON,

LATE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE ARMIES;

AND FORMERLY

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA:

WHO DIED AT MOUNT VERNON,

DECEMBER 14, 1799,

IN THE 68th YEAR OF HIS AGE.

DELIVERED JANUARY, 12th 1800, IN THE INDEPENDENT, OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA.

BY ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, D.D.

ONE OF THE PASTORS OF SAID CHURCH.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

THE following sermon was printed at the time it was preached. The M.S was submitted to one of his respectable Parishoners, who returned it with the following Note.

13th February, 1800.

Dear Sir,

I have perused with much satisfaction the enclosed, and am of opinion, that it will not be less acceptable to the public eye, than it was to the audience when it was delivered. I think it contains every thing that ought to be expected in a funeral sermon on the death of the late General Washington.

With very much esteem,

Your obedient servant.

Doctor Keith.

* * * * *

SERMON

ON THE

DEATH OF

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON.

II. CHRON. XXXV. 24.

"AND ALL JUDAH AND JERUSALEM MOURNED FOR JOSIAH."

It is a very solemn and affecting scene, which is presented to our view, in this portion of sacred history. Though a long series of ages has passed away since it took place, it cannot yet, be attentively reviewed, without exciting in the thoughtful mind, and feeling heart, many serious reflections and tender emotions. With every other part of Scripture, it was doubtless recorded "for our learning," for our instruction and improvement. It shews, particularly, in a striking point of light, how important to a community, are the life and services of a great and good prince; or of a person holding a primary place in the government of his country—and in that elevated station, distinguished by his superior talents, integrity, and public spirit; and how heavy, and afflictive, is the loss sustained by a nation, when such a ruler and benefactor is "taken from its head," by the awful stroke of death.

To these interesting reflections, we are unavoidably led by the consideration of the passage before us—

while we here behold the whole Jewish nation, with one consent, and as by one instantaneous impulse, assuming the aspect, and exhibiting the tokens of the deepest affliction and mourning, on account of the death of their late king Josiah ; who was one of the worthiest and best, that ever reigned over them; and whose life, from his earliest years, had been employed, under the influence of the purest and noblest principles, in promoting the temporal and religious interests of his people.

This good king was yet in the midst of his days, or in the vigor of his age, when it was his lot to receive a fatal wound, in a battle, to which he was probably led, by the terms of his alliance with the king of Israel, who was then tributary to the king of Babylon ; and therefore bound to engage on the side of that monarch, in the war which was commenced against him by the king of Egypt. Of this wound Josiah died, immediately after his return to Jerusalem ; and thus the flattering, and apparently well founded hopes of his people, for a much longer continuance of his reign, and of the multiplied blessings which they derived from it, were suddenly terminated in the most gloomy and painful disappointment.

An event, so calamitous, might well be expected to diffuse the most afflicting sensations through the body of the nation ; for whose welfare he had shewn so early, so zealous, and so constant a concern. Accordingly, the sacred historian here informs us—that "All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah." The inhabitants of every part of the country, concurring with those of the capital city, the place of the royal residence, in every becoming affecting demonstration of sorrow, under this heavy national calamity.

It is added, that Jeremiah the prophet, particularly lamented for Josiah. This venerable prophet, as it became a servant of God, under that peculiar sacred character which he sustained, was penetrated with the deepest grief for the loss of a prince, whose pious cares, and indefatigable exertions, were especially directed to the advancement of the cause of religion and virtue: a cause with which the peace and prosperity, and all the great interests of every community, as well as of every individual, are essentially and inseparably connected. And it is also mentioned, as another memorable circumstance of this national mourning for Josiah, that it was long perpetuated, by the institution of certain solemn services, including, particularly, some elegiac compositions set to plaintive music, in commemoration of an event, so mournful in its nature, and so afflicting in its consequences.

In the history of mankind we shall often find a remarkable similarity of events and circumstances, occurring in the most distant countries and periods of time.

With this memorable mourning of the Jewish nation, for the loss of their eminently worthy and amiable Josiah;—how striking is the resemblance, that appears in the universal, unfeigned mourning, now exhibited by the American people, for the loss of their great, and excellent, and beloved WASHINGTON; whose life was one of the most valuable blessings of a beneficent Providence to his country, and whose death is justly lamented, as a great national affliction.

When the man, whom God in his good providence, was pleased to honor, as the most distinguished instrument in his hand, for securing to the people of America, the liberty, civil and religious—the independence-

the peace, and the prosperity, in the enjoyment of which, they are at this day, apparently, the most favored, and happy nation in the world. When he, who, obedient to the voice of his country, repeatedly, and with magnanimous self-denial, exchanged his beloved domestic pursuits and enjoyments, for the most arduous stations of public trust and service: And in those stations victoriously led our armies through the vicissitudes of a most difficult and perilous revolutionary war; and ably, and successfully presided in the executive department of our national government, during many of the most eventful years of an unexampled, and awfully portentous crisis in Europe, in which our political and commercial interests were deeply involved. When he, who in the favorite scenes of private life, in which he delighted to pass his tranquil days, whenever the safety and glory of his country permitted, displayed the beauty and loveliness of those finer feelings, and accomplishments, which dignify and adorn the gentleman, the philosopher, the friend, and the domestic character. When he, in a word, who first vindicated our rights, as men and christians, with his sword; and then shielded them from the envious, hostile designs of powerful foreign nations, and the turbulence of restless intestine factions, by the wisdom of his counsels, the equity, moderation, and firmness of his measures; and who uniformly shone pre-eminent in great talents, in disinterested patriotism, and in the lustre of his public and private virtues and usefulness: ——————When such a man is removed by the supreme, righteous Disposer of all things, from every station of honorable trust, and important service among his fellow mortals—and from all the scenes of mortali-

ty ;—surely, it well becomes the nation, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments, and greatest benefactors, to mourn with the feelings of undissembled, deep, and lasting sorrow !

In such a sorrow all the citizens of the United States, who really love their country—with many in other nations, who possess the sensibilities of a feeling heart, and the genuine spirit of philanthropy, will bear a tender sympathetic part ; and sincerely mourn the father of his country, the patron of liberty, the friend of humanity—fallen under that stroke of death, to which the greatest, and most illustrious, equally with the feeblest, and most obscure of the human race, must finally bow.—

Of the general mourning, which the death of a man, so eminently and honorably distinguished in life, might well be expected to produce—the most unequivocal tokens are exhibited, wherever the melancholy tidings of it have been spread abroad. The customary badges of grief, which indicate a near and valued friend departed ; together with the various, more public and solemn expressions of a nation's sorrows, proclaim, in the most affecting, and impressive language, that our illustrious and beloved WASHINGTON is numbered with the dead ; and that his country sensibly feels, and sincerely mourns, the deeply interesting, and afflicting event !

That the sorrows, which we share in common with our fellow-citizens, throughout the union, and with the friends of liberty and humanity generally, under this bereaving dispensation of Divine Providence, may be brought under the guidance of sober reflection and true wisdom, and directed to some useful ends.—

I shall endeavour, in the process of this discourse, to shew.

I. Why the death of great and worthy men, who have been eminently useful in their day, and especially in exalted stations of public trust and service, ought to be lamented; and,

II. What profitable improvement may be made of the event, which is the occasion of the present general mourning of our country.—

I. Why the death of great and worthy men, who have been eminently useful in their day, and especially in exalted stations of public trust and usefulness, ought to be lamented.—

Now the death of such men may well be lamented.

1. On account of the many and great evils which they are instrumental in averting from a people.—

In the present fallen state of human nature, the passions of men, their pride, their ambition—their avarice, their love of criminal pleasure; in a word, their selfishness, strongly impel them to deeds of injustice, oppression,—and violence.—By these vicious dispositions, individuals are often stimulated to bitter and deadly contentions;—and communities, and nations, are plunged into all the outrages and calamities of public, and long protracted wars. If left to follow the impulse of these corrupt propensities of their fallen nature, without restraint or opposition, a few of the strongest and most unprincipled, bringing others, by force or artifice, into a subserviency to their views, would not hesitate, with the aid of such instruments of their will, to invade the rights, to seize the possessions, to sacrifice the lives of their fellow-men, in any extent which they might think expedient, or find practicable, to the accomplishment of their own base and criminal purposes.

But as the great Ruler of the universe, has designed and formed mankind for the social state; and has made their common mutual safety and welfare depend, in a great measure, upon that union and order which constitute the strength and beauty of society;—so he constantly exercises a secret control over all human inclinations, projects, and enterprizes.—And having the hearts of all men in his hands, he holds all their tumultuous imaginations, raging appetites, and furious passions, continually subject to that irresistible authority and power, by which, when he pleases, he commands the stormy winds into a calm; and says to the swelling boisterous sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." In his government of mankind, however, and for the accomplishment of his wise designs, relating to them, he generally uses some visible means and subordinate agency, which have a natural fitness to bring about the worthy ends that he has proposed. In this view, he employs eminently the institutions of religion, and the ministers of his word, among the people, to whom he has been pleased to grant the distinguishing privileges and benefits of Divine Revelation. And in the nations generally, he raises up from time to time, particular persons, endued with some peculiar talents and dispositions; by which they are qualified to rule over their fellow-men—and prompted to employ their power and influence, in providing for the common welfare of the great body of the people; in restraining and quieting the turbulent members of the community; and in disconcerting the schemes, and repelling the assaults of their various enemies.

Thus—while the Supreme Governor of nations, sometimes elevates men of strong natural abilities, connected with the most vile, and profligate moral principles, to great power,—and then uses them as the sword in his hand, for chastising any wicked and rebellious people, whom he determines to punish;—he also, at his pleasure, calls forth, and advances to exalted stations of authority and trust, men of superior talents and worthy character; and by their instrumentality, shields or delivers a people, whom he chuses to favor, from those violences or grievances, with which they may be menaced or oppressed.—By their friendly and successful agency, the nation, or community, with the care of whose interests they are intrusted, whether in the capacity of military commanders, or civil magistrates, is rescued from the galling yoke of bondage—from the dreadful state of anarchy and confusion; or from the final dissolution and utter ruin, to which it might otherwise be reduced, by the folly and wickedness of many of its own members; or by the all grasping ambition, and insatiable cupidity of foreign hostile nations and potentates.

Such are the men, whom "the Lord Most High—Who is the great King over all the earth," often "gives to a people, according to his manifold mercies, to be," under himself, "their saviours;" to be "the ministers of God, for" eminent "good," to them in a state of peace; and his chosen instruments, for "saving them out of the hand of their enemies," in a time of war. When, therefore, men thus specially qualified, and called to fill the most exalted and important stations, in the service of their country; and thus employed, under the direction of Divine Providence, in averting

from it the most formidable and destructive evils, are removed by death; the afflictive event is doubtless to be regarded, as justly demanding the tears of a bereaved people—as worthy of being lamented with every dignified expression of unfeigned national sorrow.

I proceed to observe, on the other hand, that the death of such valuable defenders, and guardians of a people, is to be thus lamented.

2dly. On account of the eminent benefits, which their instrumentality is employed, by the good providence of God, in securing to their country.

Many of the reflections, which we would be here naturally led to pursue, have been, in some degree, already anticipated, in the observations suggested under the preceding branch of this discourse.

The necessity of the institution and support of government, among mankind, is universally acknowledged; and its utility has been recommended by the experience of all nations, in all ages. So far as any system of government is adapted to unite a people in a state of order and peace—to enforce the principles and rules of justice among them—and to secure them from the mischievous designs of their enemies, it is sanctioned by the approbation of Heaven; and its establishment is to be regarded, as an important public blessing, by the people who enjoy it.

Between different systems of human government, there is indeed as wide a difference, as between the meanest hut, raised by the rude savage, merely for his defence from the attacks of beasts of prey, or the injurious effects of inclement elements and seasons; and the noblest edifice, erected by the ingenious artist, combining requisite strength, with pleasing proportion,

and chaste ornament, and adapted to afford the most secure and comfortable accommodation to its inhabitants. But for directing well, and applying efficaciously, the powers of the best constitution of government, it is obvious, that none are properly qualified, but those who possess peculiar abilities for the management of public affairs: And it is equally certain, that on the moral principles, which direct their conduct, the welfare of the community very much depends. Whether they are charged with the administration of the civil, or military affairs of their country; having its great interests committed to their care, and its resources placed in their hands; they are at once laid under peculiar obligations, and enjoy peculiar advantages, for studying and promoting the public good; and when possessed of those united qualities of the head and the heart, which distinguish great and worthy rulers and commanders—the public good will be the favorite object of their regard and pursuit—and in the ordinary course of things, will be greatly advanced by their agency. In their superior station, distinguished by their great talents and virtues—by their knowledge of human nature, of its powers and weaknesses—of its passions and its wants—and of the state of their own nation, considered in an abstract point of view, and in its relations to other countries—by their penetrating, accurate judgment, and enlarged, comprehensive view of things—by the wisdom of their counsels, and the rectitude of their measures—by the purity and ardor of their patriotism; and by their active courage, and unyielding resolution, in meeting and surmounting the various and multiplied dangers, difficulties and trials, which they may have to encounter in their country's

cause and service—they are eminently qualified, to teach the great body of the people, for whom they act, the nature and value of their civil and sacred rights, and privileges, and to guide and animate their exertions in the pursuit and defence of their true interests; —and under the smiles of a favouring Providence, their instrumentality has a great effect, in securing and improving the most important national advantages.

The desirable ends, which their high qualifications, and patriotic labours are thus adapted to accomplish, are further promoted by the powerful engaging influence of their great example. For "as the going forth of the sun, is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof;" so the examples of great and good men, moving in exalted spheres of public service, and usefulness, diffuse their enlightening and enlivening beams, through the wide extent of the land in which they bear rule; and have an happy tendency to stimulate and allure the other members of the community, in subordinate stations, to imitate their conduct, in the cultivation of a public spirit, and in the practice of whatsoever things are pious and just—generous and honorable—lovely and praise-worthy;—and, in short, in the pursuit of that course of well doing, which conducts individuals, and communities, to a state of the most desirable prosperity in this world; while it leads those, who walk in it, under the influence of a truly christian faith, to glory, honor, and immortality in the world to come.

Highly favoured indeed, are the people to whom the Lord gives such rulers and commanders, as his chosen agents, for communicating and securing to them so

many precious blessings of his favor—and so rich a portion of national honor and happiness!

When, therefore, a people are bereaved of such valuable benefactors, they sustain an unspeakable loss; and are solemnly called by the providence of God to mourn—feelingly and deeply to mourn under the heavy and distressing stroke of his holy hand.

The observations which have been suggested, will, it is believed, admit of a just and forcible application to the present case of our own nation, under that very afflicting dispensation of Divine Providence, which has bereaved us, of a general and statesman, who, in the expressive and emphatical language of our House of Representatives in Congress,—"was the first in war—the first in peace, and the first in the affections of his country."

To trace the respectable descent of this great and worthy man—to attend to the first promising buds of a superior mind, and of his future greatness, which began to unfold themselves in his juvenile days and pursuits—to observe the early display of his extraordinary military talents in a station of subordinate but honorable and important command, while these United States were yet dependent provinces of Great Britain—to follow him in his great career of military glory,—when as commander in chief, he directed the operations of our armies, during the whole eight years of the memorable revolutionary war; into which we were driven by the unwarrantable claims of the British government—claims too arrogant, degrading, and injurious, not to be resisted and repelled by the free born and high spirited sons of America—to mark the dignified manner in which he resigned into the hands of the American Con-

gress the high commission which he had received from them, when the great objects of it,—the independence and liberties of his country, were accomplished and secured ; and the truly paternal affection, and solicitude, with which he addressed some of the wisest and most salutary moral and political instructions and admonitions, to his fellow-soldiers, and fellow-citizens, when from the most elevated station of military authority and power, he voluntarily and cheerfully descended to the ordinary condition and employments of a private gentleman—to exhibit the important part, which within a few years after this period, he was called to act in that venerable convention of the principal statesmen of America ; by whose collected wisdom, our present excellent system of federal government was framed, and in whose deliberations he presided, as the most honored and influential member of that enlightened and patriotic body—to review his able and successful administration of this new government, in the office of President of the United States, to which he was first raised for the legal term of four years ; and in which he was afterwards continued for a like term, by the unanimous suffrages of the widely dispersed millions of his fellow-citizens—to represent him in the sublime attitude in which he appeared, when delivering the last solemn advice, which he directly addressed, under a public character, to the American people ; advice which was the fruit of superior wisdom, matured by long experience, and of the purest and most disinterested patriotism, that had stood the test of the severest trials ; while at the same time he announced his decided resolution to decline standing a candidate for a re-election to the presidency, on which he had reason

to calculate with the greatest confidence ;—and conformably to his declared purpose, immediately retired, from all the flattering distinctions connected with the supreme magistracy of the Union, to the ardently desired calm retreat of private life, in which he designed, and hoped to pass the residue of his days in undisturbed tranquility and peace—to pourtray the glory of the finishing public act of his exalted, and unabated patriotism, when he once more yielded to the importunate call of his country, and consented to resume the command of the forces, which it was preparing for its defence against the injustice and violence of a rapacious, ambitious, and unprincipled foreign power ;—to contemplate him here in the closing scene, when thus determined and prepared, to relinquish the repose which was so agreeable and desirable to his advanced age, after the long continued pressing labours of a most active public life, for the toils and dangers of an apparently inevitable and arduous war ;—receiving the solemn mandate of Heaven, which summoned his great soul to the world of spirits ;—and with that calm and unshaken firmness of mind, for which he was ever remarkable, finishing his honorable, earthly career in death—to speak now particularly of the inestimable services which he rendered to his country, and to the cause of religion, liberty, and humanity ;—or to attempt a delineation of the particular features of his great character.

——————————All this would form an undertaking, to which I feel myself wholly incompetent ! and which could not be well executed by the best abilities, within the limits prescribed to this discourse. This accordingly comes not within my present design ; but is left as the proper work of the biog-

rapher and historian;—and in the faithful, well-written memoirs of his life,—and history of his country,—the sublime character,—and the illustrious deeds of our WASHINGTON, will doubtless shine with pre-eminent glory,—through a long series of ages, and diffuse an increasing splendour over many succeeding generations.

In the mean time, while we mourn the Father of our country taken from our head, and gone down to "the grave, the house prepared for all living;"—let us now be led to consider,—

II. What profitable improvement may be made of this event, which is the occasion of the present deep and universal sorrow and mourning of our country—and,

1. It becomes us to cherish the remembrance of the excellent character and eminent services of our country's most illustrious citizen and distinguished benefactor, whose death we now lament, with a grateful sense of our obligations to the beneficent providence of God, who qualified and employed him, as a leading instrument, in securing to us so many, and such inestimably valuable national blessings.

The memory of the man, whom God was pleased most remarkably to honor, as the instrument in his hand, for the communication of so much good to our highly favoured nation, should be peculiarly dear to all our citizens;—and it should be transmitted, with every appropriate, impressive mark of distinguishing esteem and regard, to posterity—as a splendid example for the imitation of future patriots, generals, and statesmen—and of our citizens generally, in every department of public and private life.—In the records of na-

tions, excepting only those of God's ancient, chosen and peculiar people, we should probably search in vain for the example of an union of great talents and virtues, of worthy conduct, and important usefulness, superior, if we even could find one equal, to that which has been exhibited by our admired and beloved WASHINGTON, in those high military and civil employments, in which he was called to defend and serve his country.

But remembering that "every good gift," every valuable possession, privilege, or benefit, whether of a private or public nature, or through whatever channel, or medium, conveyed to us, "comes down from the Great Father of lights and mercies;"—let us study to be thankful to HIM, who graciously provided such a general and statesman, to conduct our military operations, and administer our civil and political affairs, during a long period, the most critical and interesting to our nation—who crowned his wise councils, his virtuous measures, his heroic efforts, with such happy success—and who prolonged his life, with his capacity, and his zeal unimpaired, for the service of his country—till it was safely conducted through a long series of the most perplexing difficulties, and formidable dangers, and at length securely established, as we trust, in the enjoyment of a most excellent constitution of government, and a most desirable state of peace and prosperity. Most kind and indulgent, indeed, has been the providence of the God of our mercies, in first bestowing upon us, and then forbearing to remove from us, the man, who was one of the most impregnable bulwarks of our country in war, and one of its strongest pillars in peace—till it was settled and confirmed in its present eligible situation; in which it does not probably so immediate-

ly depend, as at some former periods, on the services or influence of any individual; and seems not likely to be so easily shaken, as it might have sometimes heretofore been, by the restless spirit of internal faction; or by the dark intrigues, or open violence of foreign, jealous, and unfriendly nations!

Let us then, at once, honor the memory of our departed illustrious General and President; and praise the divine and most bountiful Author of all the various blessings of a civil and a sacred nature, which through his distinguished agency, we have experienced, and now enjoy, as an independent, a free, a great, and an happy nation!

2. Let us learn "to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils,"—and to repose an humble, stedfast trust and hope, in the ever-living, all-sufficient, and unchangeable God, for that guidance, protection, and various aid, which as a people, we continually need, in order to our safety and welfare.

"Lord, what is man, and wherein is he to be accounted of?"—"All flesh is grass, and the glory of man, as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth!"—What is man in honor? He is a shadow that passeth rapidly away. What is man in his best estate? He is, in respect of all the worldly advantages which he may possess, and of all the benefits which his fellow-mortals may expect from him, altogether vanity!

"Let us not then put our trust in princes,"—in those who among their fellow-men are clothed with supreme authority and power, or bear the character of the great

and the good—" nor in the son of man," of whatever qualifications, or in whatever station, " for in him there is no" effectual or certain " help." " Their breath goeth forth—they return to their earth; in that very day all their thoughts," either for their own aggrandizement, or security, or for promoting the public good, " perish" in the gloom of " the grave, where they have no more a portion in any thing that is done under the sun."—But let us remember, " that happy is the man, and happy the people—and that happy alone are they, who have the God of Jacob for their help, and whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is;—who keepeth truth forever—who executeth judgment for the oppressed—who loveth the righteous; but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down—who putteth down one and sitteth up another—who straighteneth the nations and enlargeth them at his pleasure; and who, in the exercise of his sovereign, Almighty, most wise, righteous, and beneficent dominion, reigneth for ever, even unto all generations."

Our lately universally esteemed, and now universally lamented WASHINGTON, in the possession of all his excellencies and honors, was but a mortal man. Thanks be to God for the great qualifications by which he was distinguished—for his important public services—and for the long continuance of his eminently valuable and useful life!—And now, blessed be God, that the hopes of our country are not buried in the same tomb with his venerable dust; but that to Himself, who is " the possessor of all that is in the heaven and in the earth—whose is the greatness, and the power, and

the glory, and the victory, and the majesty, who reigns over all, and who is the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever"—we may still look up as "our light and our salvation," "for leaders and commanders of the people," for the preservation of our independence and liberties, government and laws, order and peace, and the perpetuity and advancement of our national, as well as personal safety, prosperity, and happiness!

3. While we mourn for the loss which our nation has sustained, by the death of such an able defender, and distinguished benefactor—let us be excited to pray for our country, and especially for those, who occupy the principal places of authority, trust, and power, in its government.

"To offer up supplications, prayers, and intercessions for all men," and especially for those, whose interest and welfare, are most nearly connected with our own, and upon whose counsels and measures, our safety and happiness, under God, most immediately depend—is at all times an important christian duty. For our fellow-men, in every nation of the earth, in every branch of the great family of mankind, we should constantly pray; that they may enjoy the advantages of wise and good governments and laws—and the blessings of the gospel of the great Redeemer of fallen men, in its unclouded light, uncorrupted purity, and saving power; —"that the people who delight in war may be scattered—that the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end—that the just may be established,"—and that the cause of truth and righteousness, and of genuine liberty, civil and religious, involving all the great interests of communities and individuals, may prevail and triumph, universally, through the world.

For our country, especially, we should continually pray—that the great Governor of nations, our guardian God, and the God of salvation, may be pleased to forgive our multiplied follies and offences, by which we are daily forfeiting his mercies, and provoking his judgments ;—"to turn away every token of his anger from us, and remember us with the favor which he bears to his chosen and peculiar people"— to secure to us the full and uninterrupted possession of our personal and national rights and privileges ; in the enjoyment of order, harmony, and tranquillity at home, and of peace and honor abroad—to prosper all ranks and classes of the inhabitants of our land, in their several stations, and lawful, worldly pursuits—and "to visit us with" the infinitely more precious blessings of "his spiritual and everlasting salvation."

"For all in authority over us," and intrusted with the care of our national interests, in public stations, we ought more particularly to pray, that they may be "wise and able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness," and zealous, active, resolute, and stedfast in their concern for, and pursuit of the public good. Considering how multiplied, arduous, and perplexing, are the cares of government—how peculiarly strong and pressing are the temptations, with which men, in exalted stations of trust and power, are continually surrounded ; and how many, and great, are the evils or benefits, which may result to the community from their ill or good conduct, in the important places which they occupy—in the elevated spheres wherein they move—we should, from a tender sympathy for them, and a prudent regard to our own interests, pray continually for our rulers—"that the Lord may give them a wise and understanding heart, to discern be-

tween good and evil, and to go out and in before a great people," with discretion and fidelity, with unsullied honor and good success.

And thus are we, by a special, solemn voice of Divine Providence, called to pray for our country, at the present juncture, while mourning the recent death, of our late illustrious General and President; and to pray, more particularly, for his worthy and venerable successor in the presidency of the Union; that he may be divinely assisted, in sustaining the increased weight of anxious care, which is devolved upon him, by the loss of so early, able, and experienced an associate, in the great cause of America—and that he may steadily and firmly, proceed to tread in the same steps of wisdom, virtue, and honor, by which the great and excellent WASHINGTON conducted his country, to the present dignified and enviable rank, which it holds among the nations of the earth.

Finally;

4. Let the consideration of this very affecting instance of mortality, which has filled the heart of our nation with sorrow and mourning, be improved to awaken and engage us all, to a faithful and diligent discharge of the duties of our respective stations; and to a seasonable preparation, and constant watchfulness for the order of God, which shall dismiss us from all our employments here, to a state of righteous and everlasting retribution in a future world.

To act, as if we thought that we were bound by no obligations, to extend our views or regards beyond ourselves; but had a right to employ our time and powers, merely to serve our own selfish purposes, would be very disgraceful to our character as men and citizens. Much

more reproachful then, must such conduct appear to be, in those who bear the name of Christians—when it is viewed in the light of the gospel—when it is considered as in direct contradiction to those benevolent and refined principles of the religion of the blessed Jesus, which require us "to love our neighbour as ourselves"—"to rejoice with them that rejoice—to weep with them that weep"—"to bear one another's burthens"—"and as we have ability and opportunity, to do good to all around us."

Let us, therefore, reflect and consider what the Lord our God and Saviour requires of us, in our several stations—and endeavour to occupy, with the talents which he has committed to us, in that manner, by which his great name may be most glorified, and the best interests of our fellow-men, together with our own, most effectually advanced.

FATHERS, Let not the residue of your strength be wholly spent in that ease and inactivity, which, to declining years, usually appear most inviting.—If you are yet living to yourselves, and for this world; surely it is high time that you begin to live to the Lord, and for eternity.

If, in the course of a life of christian faith, piety and virtue, you are serving and honoring the adorable Author of your being and redemption, and pursuing the great ends of your rational existence,—"Be not weary in well doing, but hold on your way, and hold out to the end, and still go from strength to strength, till you enter into that everlasting rest, which remaineth for the people of God." And remember, that it particularly becomes you, to teach the rising generation their duties to God, to their neighbour, and themselves

—to admonish them of the vicissitudes, the temptations, the dangers, to which they may be exposed in the untried journey of life; and to recommend the counsels of matured wisdom, and long experience, by the engaging influence of the good example, which you will exhibit, while you continue to walk with steady steps, and cheerful hopes, in "the path of the just; which is as the shining light" of the morning, "shining more and more unto the perfect day."

YOUNG MEN, Let not the flower of your age; the vigour of your faculties, be dishonored and wasted in the indulgence of unmanly sloth—of unprofitable, dissipating amusements—or of sordid, criminal, and destructive pleasures: But study to furnish your minds with useful knowledge, to acquire and strengthen the dispositions and habits of purity and temperance, of regularity and diligence, of generosity and economy. "Remember your Creator and Redeemer in the days of your youth:" Choose and pursue "the ways of wisdom, which are the only ways of pleasantness, and peace:" Fulfil the obligations of every relation, which you sustain, with respectful attention and affection; with strict fidelity and becoming cheerfulness; and let your breasts glow with a laudable, ardent ambition, to act a worthy part, and become the ornaments and blessings of society, in your day.

Let it be the concern of every one of us, in short, that we may feel the power, and manifest the influence of those sacred, heavenly principles of the gospel, which will bear down every selfish, contracted disposition of our degenerate nature, and elevate and enlarge our hearts, in the most benevolent desires, and prompt us to correspondent, worthy efforts, to be as useful as pos

sible, in our respective spheres—to contribute something to the welfare of the civil community, with which we are connected, and to the extension of the bounds, and the advancement of the glory of the Redeemer's kingdom of grace in the world.

And by the great example of the distinguished friend and benefactor of his country, whose loss we now deplore; let us all be taught and animated to cherish that public spirit, which shone so conspicuously in him; and which will determine us to maintain for ourselves, and to transmit to the generations, that shall come after us, the national independence, and the precious liberties involved in it, for which he so nobly fought—and which he guarded with so vigilant an eye, and faithful a hand,—and to exert our influence, as far as it may extend, for preserving and supporting religion and morality, order and peace, in our land,—for promoting the prosperity of church and state, and for aiding our fellow-citizens, and fellow christians, and our brethren of mankind, generally, whom we may be able to serve, in respect to their common and sacred, their temporal and eternal concerns.

The father of his country no longer lives, to unite, animate, and guide its citizens, and its armies in its defence—to watch for its welfare—to plan and labour for its prosperity and its glory. How far its safety, or its interests may be affected by his lamented death, we yet know not. But when we reflect upon the existing circumstances of our nation, deprived, as it now is, of the presence, the talents, the counsels, the cares, the example, the influence of its most revered and honored citizen, its most strenuous defender, and most vigilant and faithful guardian,—we must surely be aware, that

it now demands from all, whose interests are embarked in its cause, a more solicitous attention to its necessities—and a redoubled zeal in every patriotic effort, by which it may be defended and benefitted. And let those, who may be ready to apprehend, that they can do little or nothing for the public good, be reminded, that they can, at least, pray for it; and that "the Lord is a God hearing prayer;" and "having already done great things for us," may be ready to do still greater things for us,—"but will yet be inquired of by us, that he may do them for us."

Recollecting also, that our opportunities in this world for serving God, and our generation, according to the will of God, and for securing the salvation and everlasting happiness of our own souls, are very short and precarious—let us be admonished to undertake and "to do with our might, whatever our hand findeth to do."

Every instance of mortality, which we witness, or of which we hear, is adapted, impressively, to enforce the word of God, by which we are warned, "that the time is short." But from the tomb of the great WASHINGTON, for whom his country now mourns, through all its borders—the voice of death speaks to us with more than ordinary solemnity and emphasis—"Be ye also ready—for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." "In such an hour as we think not," or may be least aware of his approach, the Son of Man, "who hath the keys of death, and of the invisible world," may come, by his dread summons, to call us from time to eternity; from a temporary state of service and trial, to an everlasting state of righteousness and unchangeable retribution.

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How soon did the humane and amiable hero, yield to the violence of unrelenting disease! How quickly did the mighty and renowned conqueror fall, with all his mortal honors blooming upon him—"in that war in which there is no discharge!"

And must not we as certainly die? And may we not, in like manner, die with as little previous warning of our impending dissolution; or by a stroke from the last enemy, still more sudden and unexpected? O let us hasten then, in our preparation for the closing scene of life—for that all important change of worlds to which we are approaching, as fast as the rapid flight of time can bear us forward!

Let us look well to ourselves, and see that our souls are committed in the exercise of that unfeigned faith, "which is the gift of God, and the work of his holy spirit," into the hands of that Divine, Almighty, and most gracious Redeemer, "whose is the only name under Heaven, given among men, by which any can be saved;" and on whose atonement, righteousness, and intercession, the most illustrious saviours of their country, equally with the meanest and most abject of the children of men, must entirely depend, for the forgiveness of their sins; for reconciliation and peace with God; and for the attainment of that everlasting life, which God has promised to believers, and which is to be found only in his Son. Let us, also, be active and diligent, "stedfast and immoveable, and more and more abounding, in all the work and service of the Lord," to which we are called, as the followers of the great Captain of our salvation; and let it be our most serious concern, and care, that we may be found ever watching for the coming of our Lord; and waiting with

a stedfast faith, with a lively hope, and with an earnest desire, for his sovereign order to lay down our flesh in its native earth ; and to enter, disincumbered of all the burthens of mortality ; and completely delivered and purified, from the power and pollution of sin, under which we now groan, into the full and everlasting "joy of our Lord."

Then will the course of our pilgrimage, through this vale of tears, close in peace ; and "having fought the good fight, and finished the work," which our Lord has appointed to be accomplished by us, on earth—and having thus approved ourselves "faithful" in his cause and service, "unto death, we shall receive the crown of immortal life, which he hath promised, and which he will give to all who believe in, and obey him, and who love his appearing." And then, in his heavenly kingdom, "washed from our sins in his blood, who loved us, and gave himself for us ; and advanced us to the dignity of kings and priests unto God and his father," we shall mourn no more for the awful desolations of death, or under any of the lamentable effects of sin ; but shall find "all tears wiped away from our eyes," by the kind hand of our gracious God and Redeemer ; and "beholding his face in righteousness, and satisfied with his likeness, we shall triumph in his praise, and in that fulness of joy which is in his presence," through all the ages of a blessed eternity !

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God and our Saviour, be honor and glory, for ever and ever." AMEN !

A

CHARGE,*

DELIVERED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE

Rev. JAMES ADAMS,

IN

THE INDEPENDENT, OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

AT

DORCHESTER.

MAY 8th, 1799.

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,

You are now invested with the office of a minister of Christ. In a solemn manner you are ordained and set apart to those eminently important labours, in which persons bearing this sacred character are called to serve the great and blessed God in the gospel of his Son.

The services upon which you have thus entered, and to which you are now, by most peculiar obligations, bound to devote your talents and your life, are in their nature the most honorable, in their design the most benevolent, and in their consequences the most interesting, of all the employments, in which you could possibly be engaged on earth. For to you is committed that divine ministry of reconciliation, by which you are constituted an ambassador for Christ, for the purposes of proclaiming to your fellow-men and fellow-sinners,

* Published with Dr. Mc Calla's Sermon, delivered on the occasion, at the time of its delivery.

"that God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and of persuading them as in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God." And under Christ "the great shepherd and bishop of souls," you are commissioned to be a pastor in his church, and intrusted with the care of guiding and conducting a portion of his flock in the way of knowledge, faith, holiness and peace, to that everlasting rest which remaineth for them in his heavenly kingdom.

Surely, according to the emphatical observation of the Apostle Paul; "If any man desire the office of a bishop or pastor, he desireth a good work."

The various duties of this excellent office, and the several parts of this eminently good work have been, we doubt not, the subjects of your own frequent serious reflections, attentive studies, and earnest prayers; in the view and hope of your becoming furnished with those human qualifications, and that divine sufficiency, which are requisite to make you "an able minister of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit." But though you may have heretofore well known and considered all that shall be now suggested on these important subjects; yet on the present solemn occasion, it may be useful in the way of a special charge, (the delivering of which has been devolved upon me) to recall to your remembrance, some of those things which must be the objects of primary attention with you, if you would, through grace, approve yourself a good and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the sacred ministerial work to which you are now ordained.

Whoever would raise a firm and durable structure, must be careful to lay a solid and good foundation. The minister who would rationally hope to preach

Christ and his gospel with any considerable good effect to others, must have been himself divinely enlightened and led to know and receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as his own Saviour; and must have found the gospel, accompanied with the agency of the Spirit of grace, made "the power of God to his own salvation." Connected with this experimental, saving knowledge of the Redeemer, and of the truth and grace of his gospel, strong intellectual powers, cultivated by a liberal education, are certainly of great importance to a christian minister; and through a sanctifying blessing, may be eminently subservient to his reputation and usefulness. But destitute of this experience, which is essential to the being of a christian, no natural abilities, nor acquired accomplishments, however valuable and ornamental in themselves, can warrant his taking the ministerial office upon him, or authorize him to hope for acceptance with God, or much success in the labours of it, among his fellow-men.

Allow me, however, to remind you, that whatever be the degree of this experience to which you have already attained; still as a christian consulting your own establishment and comfort, and especially as a minister of Christ, called to be a stated teacher and helper of others, in the concerns of their salvation, it becomes you to be careful, that you may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." In this way you will find your calling and election made more comfortably sure to your own soul; and with your increasing knowledge of Christ, and experience of his grace, you will feel the love of Christ constraining you with a more tender compassion, affectionate desire, and fervent zeal, to labour that you may

bring others to a saving acquaintance with him, and to a more clear, comfortable, and practical understanding of that well-ordered, sure, and everlasting covenant of which he is the blessed Mediator, and which, in all its rich and glorious provisions, and great and precious promises, is fitted to be all the salvation and all the desire of those who are included in it.

But as I address you at present, chiefly under your public character, as a minister of Christ, I take leave, in this view, now to exhort you in the words of the Apostle Paul, in his solemn charge to the pastors of the church of Ephesus; "take heed to yourself, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseer, or bishop," (a name, or title, expressive of the office of every pastor of the church) "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

In allusion to the special or principal business of a common shepherd, which is to feed the flock committed into his hands, you are here reminded, that your great care as a spiritual shepherd, or pastor, must be to feed the flock of Christ, with the charge of which you are intrusted. And you are to remember, that the discharge of this trust eminently consists in a judicious and faithful preaching of the word of God, which is the proper food of souls, the great instrumental means of their spiritual life, and growth in knowledge, grace, holiness, usefulness, and meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. The word of God, therefore, you must be careful to dispense in such a manner, that you may give a suitable portion of this spiritual meat, to every one in due season; and that you may be able to say, with a good conscience, that "you have not" in-

tentionally "shunned to declare to your hearers, the whole counsel of God, and have kept back nothing that might be profitable to them." Considering, that as a minister of the gospel, "a dispensation of the word is committed to you," "take heed to the doctrine" which you preach, that it be "the truth as it is in Jesus," and that "the word of truth be rightly divided," and distinctly, prudently, and faithfully applied to the various cases of the different classes of your hearers.

There is no truth in divine revelation that requires the obedience of the heart, or respects the regulation of the life, which may not be preached in its season, with propriety and advantage. In the course of your ministry, it may be profitable to your hearers, not only to illustrate and enforce the eminently great and weighty matters of the law and the gospel, which more immediately affect the salvation of the soul; but to explain and recommend whatever is decent and beautiful, lovely and praiseworthy, ornamental and attractive, in temper, conversation and conduct. But the fundamental truths of the gospel, and the essential leading duties of sobriety, righteousness and godliness, must be ever the principal subjects of your discourses; the subjects which you evidently keep mainly in view, and on which you most frequently and copiously dwell.

The doctrines which teach, the subsistence of three co-equal persons in the one adorable Godhead; the creation of man in the moral image of his Maker; the universal corruption of human nature, by the transgression and fall of our first parents, and the subjection of the whole human race, according to the righteous sentence of the divine law, to death, spiritual, temporal and eternal, because all have sinned and come short of

the glory of God; the election of a certain number of mankind, according to the sovereign, free and everlasting love and mercy of God, to salvation and eternal life in Christ the Redeemer and head of the church; the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ; the satisfactory atonement made by his death, to the law and justice of God for human guilt, the forgiveness of sins, and the justification of sinners with God, solely through the merits of his precious blood, and perfect righteousness; the necessity of the agency of the Spirit of God, to work in the soul, an unfeigned saving faith in Christ the Redeemer, and to produce in our fallen depraved nature, that great moral change, which is called regeneration and a new creation, and without which none can enter into, or see the kingdom of God; the certain perseverance and assured preservation of all who truly believe in Christ, and are born of the Spirit, in the course of an acceptable obedience to the gospel, by the power of God, through faith, to that full and everlasting salvation which is ready to be revealed at the last day; and the resurrection of the bodies of all the dead, at the end of the world, preparatory to the solemnities of the great day of judgment, when the whole race of mankind shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may give an account of himself to God, and receive according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad; that in soul and body the wicked, who have not known God, nor obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ, may be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power; and that the righteous who, being justified by faith in Christ, have been restored to peace with God, and followed after

that holiness without which none can see the Lord, may be received with the honors of a public triumph to the inheritance of immortal life, and unfading glory, in the presence and enjoyment of God, reserved for them in heaven. These are the truths which lie at the foundation of christianity, and form the distinguishing glory of the gospel. And it is the faithful preaching of these truths, upon which the gracious Head of the church, has promised to command his blessing, and which he makes effectual, by the co-operation of his Spirit, to the conviction and conversion of sinners, and the edification and consolation of believers. These therefore you must study to exhibit in their proper importance, connexion and consequences, and to represent in the clearest light and the most forcible manner, within your power, if you would hope for any measure of desirable success in your ministry.

As a preacher of the gospel, it must, in a word, be your aim and determination, "to know nothing among your hearers, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." All your reading and studies, and your intercourse among those with whom you associate and converse, should be so managed as to be made subservient to the great design of qualifying and engaging you to preach more instructively and persuasively, a crucified Redeemer.

The advantages which you derive from a liberal education; from a command of valuable books, the works of the learned, the ingenious, and the pious; from the society of those whose minds and manners are highly cultivated and improved, and from your acquaintance with the circumstances of such as remain in a state of comparative ignorance and rudeness, will be amended his

consecrated to their proper use, when they are employed to the purposes of preparing and leading you to recommend more effectually, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only hope and all sufficient Saviour of sinners, and to display more fully and forcibly, his glory and his grace, and the necessity, importance and use of all his mediatorial offices and works: In order to convince sinners of their need of an interest in him, to encourage awakened souls to apply to him, and to trust in him, and to establish and build up believers in their most holy faith, to animate their diligence and zeal in the discharge of their duty, and to increase their peace and joy in the hope and prospect of their being in due time received to himself, that they may be forever with him, beholding and enjoying his glory.

Thus you are to preach the word, and Christ in it, in season and out of season; in the stated times for the exercise of your ministry, and on particular occasions, whenever and wherever the providence of God may call you to improve them, for that purpose. And thus you are to preach, not only in the pulpit, or in public; but from house to house, embracing the occasion of ordinary visits, and every fair opportunity, for introducing the truths of the gospel, and the concerns of religion, as the subjects of your familiar conversation.

In this way you will find some advantages beyond what the pulpit ordinarily affords, for speaking of the things which belong to the peace, and concern the salvation of the soul, in such a manner as to gain the attention and impress the hearts of the individuals with whom you converse; and especially of children and persons, the afflicted, the awakened, the doubting, the tempted, and the mourners in Zion. In this

way also you will encourage such to come more readily to you, and communicate to you with greater freedom and confidence, their difficulties and discouragements, their comforts and hopes, or the views and exercises of their souls, whatever they may be. And thus, while you share with them the peculiarly refined and exalted satisfactions, which are experienced by those who take sweet counsel together, on the most interesting subjects, the subjects which concern the everlasting welfare of the soul; you may at the same time acquire such a particular knowledge of the state and circumstances of your flock, as will furnish you with many useful materials for your public discourses, by which they may be more abundantly enriched, with suitable and seasonable instruction, admonition, encouragement and consolation.

It is also in your intercourse with others that you may advantageously exhibit a good example of the salutary and happy influence of the gospel which you preach. And while you "give attendance to reading, meditation and study, to doctrine, exhortation," and every part of your ministry, remember your obligations "to be an example," which believers may safely follow, "in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity of manners, and holiness of life." A conduct remarkably inconsistent with, and contradictory to the principles and rules of, the gospel, in a preacher of it, will scarcely fail to prejudice many against the truth, and confirm and harden them in iniquity, and to render his best preaching in a great measure ineffectual to all: while the proper fruits of the sound doctrine which he teaches, manifested in his own life and conversation, will have a most favourable tendency to recommend his

instructions and exhortations, to the attention, approbation, and observance of his hearers. Let the consideration of these things then, be ever present to your mind, and have a determining weight with you, to engage you to exemplify, in the dispositions and virtues, which form and adorn the christian character, the holy gospel which you preach: so that by the forcible influence of instruction and example united, you may be the more successful in your endeavours to enlighten and lead others, in the way of righteousness and salvation.

But remembering, that unless the Lord work with you and by you, all that you can say or do, will be wholly ineffectual to the purpose of saving those who hear you, cease not to seek the assistance and blessing of God, by humble and earnest prayer. By this, in a particular manner, you are to keep up a lively communion between God and your own soul; and by this you are to ask, that you may receive of the great Father of lights, the Author of every good and perfect gift, an increase of light and grace, of knowledge and wisdom, of resolution and strength, for your private studies, your public ministrations, and all your christian and ministerial work, and that co-operation of the Spirit of grace with all your labours, which alone can crown them with desirable success. Watch therefore unto prayer, and be instant in this peculiarly important and profitable devotional exercise; and thus commend yourself, your work, your people, the whole church of Christ, and your fellow-men throughout the whole world, to the mercy and grace of God, who heareth prayer; and be assured that while he inclines and prepares your heart to pray, he will be found ready to hear, and to do for

you, and those for whom you pray, exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or think.

Intimately connected with, and subservient to the design of preaching the word, is the maintenance of that discipline which the great Head of the church has instituted for its benefit; for the preservation of its purity and order, and the promotion of its peace and prosperity. This then you should endeavour to exercise, with the concurrence of the church, in such a manner as may manifest a becoming attention and solicitude, to distinguish between the precious and the vile, in the admission of persons to sealing ordinances; and in proceeding according to the rule of the gospel, against such members of the church, as may become guilty of gross and scandalous offences, tending to bring a reproach upon the sacred society with which they are connected.

If this spiritual power with which the church in conjunction with its pastors is invested, were employed with becoming fidelity, impartiality, prudence and tenderness, it might well be expected, through a divine blessing, to be productive of very important and desirable effects, in establishing the reputation, and advancing the interests of the church.

Allow me further to recommend to you the cultivation and expression of that charitable and catholic spirit, which is most consonant to the genius of the gospel, and will have the happiest tendency to render your services, as a minister of the word, more extensively acceptable and useful.

To such a spirit, the authors and advocates of modern systems of infidel philosophy, make high pretensions. But their boasted liberality, is manifestly nothing better

than a spirit of indifference to whatever bears the name of religion, excepting only the religion of the Bible. As this is the only system which can claim a heavenly original, and is sanctioned with the stamp of divine authority, while it is framed in all its principles, to give glory to God, and to humble the pride of fallen man, and to restrain and correct those vicious propensities of our corrupt nature, which the disciples of infidelity and libertinism are determined to cherish, and for the gratification of which, they incessantly plead; their charity utterly fails them, in their treatment of this religion, and they find it difficult, if they at all attempt, to disguise the spirit of determined and bitter hostility against it, by which they are actuated. Hence it results, that however indulgent they may be to the errors, follies and vices, of all who are strangers to divine revelation, or who reject the religion which the Scriptures teach; yet, in the impious ridicule, the malicious scorn and reproaches, and the various illiberal abuse, by which they attempt to expose to contempt and hatred, the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, and the character or principles of its worthiest and best professors and defenders, they evidently discover a perverse, prejudiced, overbearing, revengeful, persecuting temper of mind.

It must indeed be acknowledged, and it is greatly to be lamented, that too much of a like unworthy temper, has been manifested by many of the professors of christianity, in opposition to those, whose opinions and practices, have in some particular points differed from their own. This, however, when it does not proceed from a heart destitute of a saving experience of the power of the religion which they profess, and wholly

under the dominion of the spirit of the world, must be ascribed to the deficiency of their knowledge of its principles, and the remaining strength of those passions, which belong to the fallen, depraved nature of man, and which are never wholly eradicated from the breasts of christians in the present state of imperfection. Hence we find that as spiritual light and sanctifying grace prevail in the heart, and as christians come to know each other better, and to understand more fully their obligations "to dwell together in unity as brethren," and to endeavour "to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," they manifest more and more of the genuine christian temper. This, as it is the fruit of the Spirit of God who is Love, and formed on the principles of the gospel, in which God proclaims through his Son Jesus Christ, peace on earth and good-will towards men, breaths the most generous charity to mankind in general, and the most tender and fervent brotherly kindness, to "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ." It prompts christians ardently to desire that the whole world, if it might be the will of God, should be brought to the knowledge and experience of the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus; and it rejoices particularly in promoting the spiritual improvement, peace and prosperity, and the temporal and eternal welfare and happiness of all who believe in him. It distinguishes indeed between truth and error, between devotion and superstition, between pure and holy zeal, and wild and mischievous enthusiasm; and it is disposed to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and to expose the falacious arts and wicked efforts of those who would destroy the foundation, or mar and deface the symmetry and beauty of

the christian system. But where it perceives the fundamental articles of the christian faith embraced, and maintained in a correspondent conduct (and this it will discern in the professors of the gospel, of various denominations) it will shew a kind forbearance towards such, in matters wherein a difference of opinions may be maintained consistently with a good conscience, and an upright practice; it will seek communion with them in every way in which it can be conveniently, comfortably and profitably enjoyed; and it will be ready and forward, not only to receive from them, but to render to them every office of christian love and friendship. This is a spirit eminently recommended and enforced by the gospel of Christ, and worthy of those who bear the name of that most benevolent and generous friend and Saviour of men; and it should shine with a superiour lustre in his ministers, who are particularly called, after his example, "to shew compassion to the ignorant, and to them that are out of the way," to bear with, and condescend to the infirmities of the weak, and the prejudices of misinformed and contracted minds, and to love all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and in love, to embrace and serve all who are of the household of faith, by whatever name they may be known and distinguished in the world.

In this view of your work, and of the manner in which it is to be performed, it will no doubt appear to you to be in many respects, no less arduous and difficult, than it is honorable and important.

When you consider how solemn and weighty is the charge of immortal souls with which you are intrusted, "and the necessity which is laid upon you to preach the gospel" plainly, fully, and faithfully; and yet how

difficult a task it will often be found to adapt your discourses to the various cases of your hearers, in such a manner as may best serve to warn the wicked, to awaken the secure, to shake the false hope of the hypocrites, to reclaim and restore the backsliding christian, to establish weak believers, to point out the way of escape to the tempted, and to pour the oil of joy into the broken and disconsolate hearts of the mourners in Zion: when you consider also the various opposition and obstacles which may be expected in the execution of your office, from the great adversary of the church, whose kingdom of darkness is disturbed and endangered by every well-designed and directed effort, to rescue from his power "those who are taken in his snares," and from the perverseness and obstinacy of fallen men, who naturally love darkness rather than light, and are disposed to relinquish the treasures and the joys of heaven, rather than abandon the pursuits, the gains, and the pleasures of sin; and yet how inadequate are your wisdom, courage, and abilities, for successfully meeting and encountering the difficulties with which you have to contend: when you seriously consider in these points of view, the nature of your sacred office; the special qualifications which it demands, and the peculiar trials connected with it; it may well be expected that you will feel yourself constrained to say with the Apostle "who is sufficient for these things?"

The consideration of these things is indeed well adapted to promote that humble and dependent frame of spirit, which is one of the most ornamental and valuable qualifications, in the highest officers, as well as in the lowest subjects of the kingdom of Christ. But if you are undertaking the work before you on properly pure

and disinterested principles, with an upright aim, and sincere desire to advance the interests and glory of your blessed Lord in the promotion of the salvation of th souls of your fellow-men, for which he laboured, suffered and died, and with a becoming concern to shew yourself in all respects, an approved workman that need not be ashamed, a good and faithful servant that may appear with confidence and joy when you shall be called to give up an account of your stewardship to your Lord and Master, in the day of final judgment; you are then so far from having reason to be discouraged, that you have every consideration which you could well desire, to animate your resolutions, and to engage you to persevering constancy in your labours. You have the special promise of your gracious Lord, from whom you have received your commission, "that he will be ever with you," to guide and assist you, "to make his grace sufficient for you, and his strength perfect in your weakness," so as to enable you acceptably to perform all the services to which he calls you, and sustain all the trials which he appoints to you. You will have the favouring countenance and helping prayers of all who love Zion and seek her good. You will have the pleasing enlivening testimony of a good conscience, that you are engaged and labouring in the cause of heaven, for the advancement of the greatest and best, even the spiritual and immortal interests of mankind. You will probably have the high satisfaction of perceiving the gospel which you preach, though it may not profit all your hearers, in consequence of the inattention and unbelief of some, yet made the power of God to the salvation of a precious number of them, through their faith in its doctrines and in the Saviour

whom it reveals and offers; with respect to whom you may greatly "rejoice in the reflection that you have not laboured with them in vain," and in the prospect, the cheering, transporting prospect of meeting them as "your joy and the crown of your rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming." And having through grace approved yourself a faithful pastor in the charge of the flock committed to your care, "when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you will receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Wherefore, my beloved brother, think of these things; "and be thou stedfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work and service of the Lord," to which you are called as a christian and as a minister of the gospel, "forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord," but is in its nature designed and adapted to be eminently useful to others, and comfortable to yourself, and if faithfully performed, shall be recompensed, through the riches of divine grace, with distinguished honors and joys, inconceivably great and ever growing, in the heavenly and everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To you, the people of this congregation I now turn my address in the hope that a few observations relative to your situation and your duty, will be heard with attention and candor, and with some good effect, on this solemn and tender occasion, in which you are so deeply interested.

How desirable and pleasing, my dear brethren, are your present circumstances and prospects, compared with what they were at a period not long past?

From a state of long continued and almost hopeless desolation, this house of your holy solemnities has been

rebuilt and prepared for your comfortable accommodation in attending upon the public worship of God. From a very low and destitute condition, in which you were few in number, and "scattered as sheep without a shepherd," you have risen and grown into a respectable organized religious society, with an encouraging prospect of receiving farther additions to your community, and to your means for maintaining and perpetuating the blessings of the gospel ministry among you. After persevering for several years, in your laudable endeavours, notwithstanding some discouraging disappointments, to secure to yourselves these inestimable blessings, you are now at length happily united in the choice of a pastor, who has been this day solemnly ordained to the ministry of the gospel, with a view to his exercising it among you, and whose highest ambition and joy, we trust, will be to spend and be spent in the service of his Lord, for the salvation of your souls. In these respects surely you have been highly favoured "through the good hand of your God upon you."

The providence of God which effected this happy change in your situation, has been in some respects as remarkably striking, as it has been to you peculiarly gracious and merciful. "The Lord hath indeed done great things for you, whereof you are glad," and on account of which all the friends of Zion, who have been acquainted with your affairs, and who lately sympathized with you in your destitute circumstances, now rejoice with you, and cheerfully unite their greatful acknowledgements with yours to the God of your mercies, who has most kindly restored to you the enjoyment of those precious gospel privileges of which you were so long deprived. "Not unto yourselves, not

unto yourselves, but unto the Lord, let all the praise and glory be given for his mercy and his truth's sake." For it was He who put it into your hearts to undertake what you have thus done for the honor of his name, the advancement of his cause, and the promotion of your own best and everlasting interests. It is He, who has supported you under all the discouraging circumstances and appearances which you had to encounter, who has furnished you with much unexpected assistance in the good work in which you engaged, and has answered your prayers and succeeded your efforts, probably beyond the utmost extent of your first hopes.

Thus highly favoured with those stated gospel ministrations and ordinances which you so long wanted, and so much desired, let your gratitude, to the gracious Author of them, be now manifested in your care to improve them with fidelity, and in your prayers that they may be divinely and abundantly blessed to you!

As your pastor is under the most solemn and sacred engagements to devote his time and his talents to the service of your souls; so we are persuaded, from the liberal things which you have already devised and done, that you will remember and feel the obligations which the gospel lays upon you, to make such provision, according to the means in your power, for his temporal wants and comfort, as will give him the command of his time, and leave him at liberty for "serving the Lord without distraction," in his studies and his labours, to promote your everlasting salvation.

Is it his indispensable duty "to take heed to the ministry which he has received in the Lord, that he may fulfil it?" Surely then you are no less bound to attend his ministrations with as much regularity and con-

stancy as may be within your power, and to concur with and aid him in all proper measures for maintaining that church order which constitutes an eminent part of the strength, the beauty and the honor of every christian society. While he is allowed the satisfaction of witnessing such a worthy and honorable conduct in you; how greatly will his heart be encouraged, and his hands strengthened in every part of this arduous work! Whether indeed you will attentively hear the word of God at his mouth or not, whether you will reverence or disregard the institutions of the gospel; he must endeavour to deliver his own soul, in the faithful discharge of the duties of "a watchman to you, in teaching, exhorting, warning, reproving, and rebuking with all authority" and impartiality, as well as with all gentleness and long suffering; so that if the wicked and disobedient will not be admonished, and engaged to turn from their wickedness and wicked ways, and seek and secure the life and salvation of their souls, but persist in their iniquities, "and die in their sins, their blood may not be required at his hands, but remain upon their own heads." But with what grief and heaviness of heart must your pastor think of his Lord and Master being thus despised, through such a neglect of his word and ordinances! And how greatly will the burden of his labours be augmented by the prospect of their proving thus fruitless to such of you as he shall not be instrumental in saving by them, and serving only on the other hand to aggravate your guilt, and to increase the terrors of your final condemnation, and the anguish of your everlasting misery! Would you not be chargeable with a conduct so unkind, so criminal, and so ruinous; would you wish to afford your pastor, the greatest comfort which he can

find in you; and would you manifest that you really love your own souls? Be admonished and entreated then, to hear the gospel which he is appointed to preach to you, and "to obey him, and to submit yourselves," in respect to the ministerial authority with which he is invested to rule over you in spiritual things; "remembering that he watches for your souls as one that must give an account, that he may do it with joy and not with grief; for that would be unprofitable for you."

Is he concerned "to take heed to himself as well as to his doctrine," that he may approve himself a worthy example to the flock, of the faith, piety, and virtue which he preaches? And does it not equally become you to endeavour "to be followers of him, so far as he shall be a follower of Christ?" But you are also to remember, that the most upright and faithful ministers of Christ, "are men of like passions with other men," and subject to infirmities similar to those with which the other followers of Christ, even the worthiest and the best, are encompassed; while they are exposed to some temptations and trials, peculiar to the office which they bear, and the work in which they are employed. Hence they are taught humility and watchfulness, their equal dependence with the weakest members of the household of faith, on the blood and righteousness and grace of the Redeemer, for the pardon of their daily failings and offences, their acceptance in every duty, and their sufficiency for all their work and warfare; and hence they learn to cherish a tender sympathy with their christian brethren, and acquire, with a more ready disposition, the wisdom and experience which are requisite, for strengthening and comforting them in all their

conflicts and temptations, and various discouragements and sorrows. Do not then look for perfection in the character of your spiritual teacher and guide; and when you may perceive in him the common frailties of human nature, which in the best on earth is only renewed and sanctified in part, suffer them not to alienate your affections from him, or to operate to the prejudice of his usefulness among you. Over such imperfections as you will have reason to believe are disallowed and lamented by himself, more than by any one else who may observe them, kindly spread the mantle of charity; and at the same time, study to "do those things which you may learn and receive, and hear and see in him agreeably to the mind and gospel of Christ;" who is the great and only perfect pattern of all that is wise and holy, good and lovely, "and who has left us his unerring example, that we should follow his steps."

Is it also an eminent part of your ministers duty, to pray for you? And shall you not feel yourselves equally bound to pray for him? The Apostles themselves, with all the eminent gifts and graces by which they were distinguished, felt their need, and often solicited the assistance of the prayers of the churches; that they might find grace to be faithful and successful, in their arduous work, and to be constant and victorious, in all their peculiar trials and temptations. "Brethren pray for us," is a request frequently repeated by the Apostle Paul, in the name of himself and of his fellow-labourers in the gospel ministry: And long observation and experience, have originated and sanctioned the maxim, that "a praying people make a preaching minister." The prayers of their people accordingly, all faithful ministers highly value and earnestly desire;

persuaded that in answer to these, the Lord delights to direct and assist, to own and to bless their labours, the success of which lies near their hearts, and forms an eminent part of their happiness. Thus to pray for your minister then, is a debt of love which you owe to him, who has engaged himself in the various arduous labours of his office, to seek and promote your everlasting interests: And in thus praying for him, you will best shew your love to your own souls; as by your prayers for him, you improve the mean particularly enjoined and recommended in the word of God, and honored by his blessing, for obtaining that co-operation of the Spirit of grace, to attend the ministrations of the gospel, without which "Paul would plant, and Apollos water" in vain; but with which the gospel, by whatever instrumentality it is dispensed, may be expected to yield its proper increase, and to bring forth in those to whom it is preached, the desirable fruits of faith and repentance, conversion and salvation. Wherefore pray continually and fervently for your minister; remembering that in so doing, you most effectually help him in his work, and secure that divine blessing upon his ministry, which will make the gospel preached by him, "the power of God to your salvation," and instrumental in building you up in the christian life, and promoting your preparation for the inheritance of the saints in light. It becomes you indeed "to pray always, with all prayer and supplication of the Spirit, for all men, and more especially for all saints; and above all for the ministers of the word of God, that they may open their mouths boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, that they may speak wisely and faithfully as they ought to speak; and that the word of the

Lord may have free course and be glorified" in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of believers, in every region of the earth, and among all the nations and tribes of mankind. But you are in a very particular manner concerned to pray, and accordingly, your fervent petitions should constantly be offered up to the God of all grace, that he may be pleased "to dwell in this house as one of his chosen habitations and places of rest;" that he may abundantly bless the provisions of his grace, with which you shall here be favoured, and satisfy his poor among you with the bread of life, and that he may clothe your minister with righteousness and salvation," so that through his instrumentality, "such may be added to the church as shall be saved," and the Lord's people made to triumph with great joy in the praises of their Saviour and their God.

In these, and in all other instances, let it be your study and care, that you may understand what the Lord requires of you as a people so highly favoured with those gopesl privileges which you now enjoy; and that through the grace of God, you may so comply with your obligations, and improve your advantages, that you may obtain the approbation and acceptance of the great and gracious Head of the church; and be the hope and comfort of your pastor on earth, and meet him with joy and triumph unspeakable at the right hand of your Redeemer and your Judge in the last day, even in that great day, "when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory

of his power ; when at the same time he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because the testimony of the gospel was believed by them) in that day."

"This charge, delivered, as before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and kingdom ;" I now conclude, with an earnest recommendation to both minister and people, that, in the very tender, interesting and important relation, in which you are connected, you will respectively endeavour to pursue that course of conduct, which may be most conducive to your mutual benefit and comfort, "studying particularly the things that make for peace," and cultivating that union of hearts, and that harmony of views, dispositions, and measures, which will be among the best means for securing your stability, growth, and prosperity. Then may you rest assured "that the God of love and peace, will be with you and bless you and keep you," during the term of service and discipline allotted to you in the church on earth ; and finally admit you to "the society of the spirits of the just made perfect, and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven ;" where all the Lord's people shall appear in the dignity and lustre becoming those "whom the Son of God has loved, and washed from their sins in his blood, and made kings and priests to his God and his Father ;" and where "they who have been wise and faithful in their designs and labours to win souls to Christ and salvation, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they who have been successful in turning many to righteousness, shall shine as stars of the first magnitude and splendour for ever and ever."

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." "And unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, and who will be found as faithful as he is able to keep his servants and people from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." AMEN.

AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE ORPHAN-HOUSE,

OF

CHARLESTON,

OCTOBER 18th, 1799.

ORPHAN-HOUSE, OCT. 18th, 1799.

Dear Sir,

The Commissioners of the Orphan-House feel themselves obligated to you, for the very elegant and well adapted discourse, this day delivered at this house, for the benefit of the Institution.

That the advantages to be derived from it, may not be confined to those only, who had the pleasure of hearing it, but be more generally diffused; I am directed by the Board of Commissioners, to request a copy of it, with your permission to print the same.

With respect and esteem, I am Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. B. HOLMES, *Chairman. Com.*

REV. DR. KEITH.

N. B. The copy of this Address was prepared for the press by the Author; but now appears in print for the first time. EDITOR.

ADDRESS.

THE Institution, whose tenth Anniversary we this day celebrate, is certainly well entitled to all the attention and favour with which it has been hitherto distinguished. Dedicated to the relief of one of the most interesting classes of the children of adversity, and embracing the objects of a most liberal and enlarged policy, as well as philanthropy, it justly claims the warmest patronage of the public, and must unite in its favour the hearts of all among us, who are disposed "to weep with them that weep;" and are solicitous to turn their days of sorrow and mourning, into days of peace and joy.

To provide an hospitable refuge to a number of our young fellow-mortals, who might have long lived destitute and friendless, or have fallen wretched and forlorn victims to a premature death; to rescue them from the complicated evils, generally connected with ignorance and idleness, in a state of extreme poverty; to furnish them with a comfortable subsistence in the years of their helpless childhood; and to prepare them, by a seasonable education in the elements of the most necessary knowledge, and by the early acquisition of a most useful habit of industry, for sharing the happiness, and increasing the strength and prosperity of the com-

munity to which they belong; how generous the design, how exalted and extensive the charity; how deserving, not only of the good wishes of the benevolent, but of the zealous exertions, and liberal aid of all, in the power of whose hand it may be, to contribute to its support, and the advancement of its usefulness.

Every return of this Anniversary, unavoidably awakens the pleasing recollection of the origin and progress of this great and beneficent undertaking. On the present interesting occasion, we naturally recal to grateful remembrance, the enlarged and active benevolence of those who formed and matured the plan of this noble Asylum; the continued generosity of those whose free-will offerings have been, from time to time, presented in aid of the funds, which the treasury of our city has been hitherto able to afford; and the unremitting zeal and exertions of those, who, in the honorable station of members of our city council, and of those, who under their direction, holding the important commission of the special guardians of this Institution, have faithfully watched over its interests, and assiduously pursued the best practicable measures for promoting its prosperity and usefulness.

To pay the due tribute of honor to the worthy authors and benefactors of so valuable an Institution, would be to me a pleasing part of this Address. But the refined feelings, which have prompted the truly benevolent to these generous deeds, will, doubtless, be much more agreeably gratified, if I shall be able to suggest any thing, that may be more directly conducive to the further advancement of the same good work; than they would be in hearing the best eulogies which I could offer, reminding them of what they have already so worthily done.

Now, as it is from the more wealthy members of the community, that an Asylum, provided for the children of want and adversity, must be expected to derive its principal support, and the means of diffusing more extensively its benefits; and as the leading design of our present attendance here, is to pour a measure of the bounty of Heaven, of which we respectively partake, into this excellent fountain of charity, that its sweet and refreshing streams, instead of failing or running lower, may flow without interruption, and with more copious supplies to those who need them: I have thought that your reflections, may be turned into a direction favourable to the accomplishment of the great object now in view, by a few observations, intended

To point out some of the most important and valuable purposes, to which *riches* may be improved; and

To remind you of some of the principal considerations or motives, by which such an improvement of them is most persuasively recommended.

Among the persons whom I contemplate as the possessors of riches, I include those, whose resources are more than adequate to the supply of their real wants, and to their comfortable accommodation in that station, which they hold in society. Those, who on the solid ground of justice and honor, possess a larger share of property, than will suffice, in the exercise of an economy, equally remote from mean parsimony, and a foolish, ostentatious, prodigality, to maintain a style of living, correspondent to the rank and employment which Divine Providence has allotted to them, may be fairly arranged in the class of the rich. For in this class there are many grades, commencing with those who enjoy something more than a real competence, and ascending

to those, who, in the enjoyment of an affluent portion of worldly goods, may be denominated opulent. And proportioned to the measure of riches, which they possess, are the obligations by which they are bound to improve them, to the most useful purposes, which can be accomplished by them.

To two only of these I mean to confine my present views.

The first relates to that superior cultivation of the mind, which is reasonably expected of those who are blessed with the advantages, which riches afford for the accomplishment of this desirable object.

It is by the powers of the mind, that men are chiefly distinguished from the irrational animals, and manifest themselves to be more nearly and honorably related to the great Father of spirits. In this view of man, the light of nature, led some of the ancient Heathen poets and moralists, to speak of him, as in a peculiar sense, the offspring of the Deity. And in the light of Divine revelation, the Almighty is represented as conferring a special favour, and distinguishing mark of honor on men, when, "through his inspiration, he giveth them understanding," by which they are made capable of knowing more than the beasts of the earth, and becoming wiser than the fowls of Heaven.

But like the wondrous little seed, from which arises the noblest plant or tree, that is presented to our view, this precious gift of Heaven, this rational understanding bestowed upon man by his beneficent Creator, in its beginning, and its earliest operations, is apparently small, and almost imperceptible; but gradually unfolds its powers, and in time displays a degree of strength and comprehension astonishingly great. In another view, also, like many of the most beautiful and valuable

productions in the vegetable creation, it requires to be cultivated with the greatest attention and care; and its growth and improvement, may usually be expected to appear, in a just proportion to the proper cultivation which it receives.

This attention to the cultivation of the human mind, which seems to be capable of receiving improvement, still new, and ever increasing, through all the periods of its immortal existence, was no doubt, a primary part of the delightful employment of man, in his primitive state of innocence, which he was to pursue in connexion with the pleasing business of dressing and keeping the terrestrial paradise, in which he was placed. But since the deep injury which our nature has suffered in its intellectual powers, as well as in its moral dispositions, by the lamentable fall of man into his present state of depravity, and various misery and ruin; the labour of acquiring any high degree of that improvement, of which the human mind remains still susceptible, has become as much more arduous, as it is now more necessary. In the present shattered state of our fallen nature, the mind of man is found like a fine painting, or statue, deeply buried, and greatly defaced, under the ruins of a magnificent city, that has been overthrown by some awful volcanic eruption, or by the more destructive shock of a tremendous earthquake. To open its way to the bright regions of knowledge, through the dark and thick shades of ignorance, with which it is covered; to raise it from the low pursuits of sensual pleasure, of sordid avarice, of noisy, vain and mischievous ambition, towards which it is now bent by its strongest natural propensities, to the nobler exercises of investigating truth, of discovering or applying the principles of useful science; and of contemplating, in the works of Crea-

tion, the glory of the adorable Creator, in whom all perfections centre, and who is the infinite source of all that is good, excellent, and lovely, throughout the boundless extent of the universe: this is truly an arduous undertaking, and demands the most attentive application, and long continued labours. They who would successfully pursue it to any considerable extent, must generally be able to command much time, free from the anxious care of providing the necessary supplies of life; an extensive collection of well-chosen books; and an easy intercourse with the learned, the ingenious, and the wise.

Now these are the advantages which riches are particularly adapted to secure; and if these advantages were duly appreciated, and improved by those who enjoy them, to what advances in ornamental and useful knowledge might they not attain?

According to the different degrees and propensities of genius, capacity, and taste, which they possess; they might, with a philosophic eye, explore the various departments of the terrestrial creation, where new wonders of Divine wisdom and beneficence, are exhibited, in every object from the greatest to the most minute; and from this inferior globe, they might ascend,

> "to walk the skies,
> Where from yon arch, that infinite of space
> With infinite of lucid orbs replete;
> Which set the living firmament on fire
> At the first glance, in such an overwhelm
> Of wonderful, on man's astonish'd sight
> Rushes Omnipotence;"

adapted to fill the soul with sentiments of the most profound adoration, and to raise it in strains of the most elevated praise, to "Him, by the word of whose mouth

the heavens, and all the host of them were made, who spake and it was done ; who commanded, and it stood fast."

Or, studying the constitution of their own nature, and tracing the springs of human actions, and the influence of the various relations in which men are connected with each other ; and following in these researches, with becoming humility and reverence, the guidance of the inspired word of God, which he has given us, to be as a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path ; they might, as legislators, or magistrates ; or as moralists and philanthropists, in a more private and less turbulent sphere, employ their enlarged knowledge of man and of the world, in framing or improving systems of laws, and enforcing the practice of virtues, which would be most conducive to the preservation and promotion of the order, the peace, and the interests of the community, in connexion with the greatest safety and prosperity of the individuals of which it is composed.

Or, engaging in the worthy designs of unfolding, and pointing out the application of the principles of the mechanic arts, and directing the eminently important labours of agriculture, that great earthly source from which riches are primarily drawn ; and founding theories in these branches, upon judicious and decisive experiments, they might contribute largely to the increase of the most valuable productions of the earth, and of the desirable conveniencies of life. Thus they might become peculiarly instrumental, in providing a more comfortable subsistence for a greater number of the human race, by which the strength of the nation, and the happiness of individuals, would be at once secured and advanced.

When the advantages which riches afford, are thus improved, to the purposes of enriching the minds of those who enjoy them, with the most valuable acquisitions of literature and knowledge, and of qualifying them by these acquisitions, for becoming the instructors and guides of others in the most useful pursuits, and interesting concerns of life : with what becoming superiority, do the possessors of riches appear ! How dignified their character : how elevated their pleasures : how beneficial their studies and employments !

But if genius should not prompt, nor inclination lead ; or if any particular circumstances should forbid the wealthy, thus to pursue the cultivation of their own minds, to any considerable extent ;

Then another way is ever open, and on this occasion presented, in the most forcible manner to our view and reflections, in which their riches may be improved highly to their own honor, and to the advancement of the interests of humanity, virtue and religion.

You will readily perceive, that I now speak generally of the relief which should be extended to the poor of every description, who are unable to provide for themselves ; and more particularly of that assistance, which should be afforded to the children of the poor, by securing to them a comfortable subsistence during their helpless years ; together with the benefits of such an education, as may qualify them for pursuing, with reputation and success, the common occupations of life, and enable them, at the same time, to read the sacred Scriptures, which shew to men the way of salvation, and reveal to them the knowledge of the things of their present and everlasting peace.

The Creator and Sovereign of the world, has been pleased to appoint to the children of men, different stations and employments. Some of these require a higher degree of mental capacity and improvement; and others a larger measure of bodily strength and activity.

He has also further distinguished one from another, by dividing to them different portions of the good things of this world. If all, duly observing and acknowledging his hand in this arrangement, would properly attend to the business of the respective stations which he has thus allotted to them, and faithfully occupy with the talents which he has committed to them, the combination of these several classes, and of the labours of the whole, would produce one grand system of order, beauty, strength and happiness, which nothing but the all comprehensive mind of the only wise and good God, could have planned. Placed in such relations of mutual dependence, it is manifestly the interest, and accordingly ought to be the concern, of every member of the community, that there should be no schism in the body; but that all the members should have the same care one for another; because when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; and when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

The rich, by a proper improvement of their wealth, furnishing suitable employment, and the means of obtaining a livelihood to the poor, become their natural and constant benefactors; while the poor, on the other hand, are the no less necessary and useful aids of the rich; as it is by the labours of the poor, that the possessions of the rich are acquired and preserved, and all the conveniencies and enjoyments attendant on a state of affluence, are supplied.

But the poor are not always able to sustain the labours, on which they may depend for their daily bread. Sickness, or the infirmities of age; or a variety of adverse occurrences, may disqualify them for pursuing their proper occupations. When these are suspended, the sources of their stated supplies fail. The situation, to which they are then reduced, may be more easily imagined, than described. Disease and pinching want united, form an accumulation of distress, which cannot fail to excite the sympathy of every feeling heart, and which demands the immediate charitable help of those by whom it can be afforded. The sufferings of such subjects of affliction, then, doubtless, call loudly upon the sons and daughters of affluence, to stretch forth the hand of compassion and beneficence, for the speedy removal of this burden, too heavy to be long borne; or for the alleviation of its overwhelming pressure, when it cannot be entirely removed. And how greatly is the value of riches enhanced, as they enable their possessors to render such desirable and important offices of kindness and charity to the poor!

But these sufferings of the poor, however immediately distressing to themselves, are, in their usual consequences, still more calamitous to their children.

Extreme poverty, when its influence is not effectually counteracted by the cheering, animating, consolations and hopes of religion, tends to depress and debase the mind. While it denies, or contracts the ability, it often extinguishes, or greatly abates, the disposition and desire of parents to provide for their children, such an education, as would enable them to rise to a better situation in the world. This most important office of parental love and care, is accordingly unhappily neglect-

ed by many in the lower ranks of society. Whether this neglect proceed from inevitable necessity, or from a criminal misapplication of the means in their power, the unhappy consequences to their helpless children, and to society, are nearly the same.

Well disposed, as some may be in their straitened circumstances, to secure, by a proper education, the best portion which they can provide for their children, they may be prevented from accomplishing their anxious wishes, by the arresting hand of death. Their children are then thrown helpless orphans upon the world, to feel the deplorable effects of so early a privation of that tender, affectionate parental care, which would have struggled through many difficulties, to provide both for their bodily wants, and the cultivation of their minds. In these afflicting circumstances, shall they be left, abandoned as the forlorn outcasts of society, unpitied, unrelieved? All the tender sensibilities of the humane heart, and the benevolent spirit of Christianity, especially, revolt from the shocking thought, from the dismal prospect.

But thus destitute and friendless, to whom shall these children of adversity and sorrow, look up for the compassion and the assistance, to which their wants give them, a peculiar claim? Does not the finger of Providence, plainly point them to the rich, as their natural guardians? And to them is not the voice of the common Parent of the great family of mankind, particularly and persuasively addressed, in that very solemn and affectionate charge, "Take these children, and bring them up for me."

But to all who are disposed to comply with this call of Divine Providence, and discharge this great debt of

humanity, it may not be convenient, personally to undertake the arduous trust. And if this important business were left solely to the good will and efforts of individuals, acting without concert or system, some would be found to bear more, and others less, than their due proportion of the burden; according to the higher or lower measure of benevolence and zeal, by which they are actuated; while many of the numerous class of the pitiable sufferers, whose case we are contemplating, might be wholly overlooked, and obtain no share of the sympathy and relief, to which they are, by their necessities, equally entitled.

Hence result the propriety, and the utility of such an Institution as this; wisely planned to combine, and by combining, to render more efficacious, the benevolent views and exertions of individuals, in accomplishing one of the most interesting and important works of charity, that can be undertaken.

This Asylum, then, may be justly regarded as a distinguishing, and most honorable monument of the wisdom, and public spirit of our city; and of the discerning and well directed charity of the individuals, who have generously contributed to its establishment and success. And while it continues, by a most munificent hospitality, to provide every comfortable accommodation, connected with seasonable instruction in some of the most necessary branches of learning, and the early acquisition of a most useful habit of industry, to a numerous class of children, who would otherwise want all these comforts and advantages; the rich and the poor, may contemplate its establishment, and its growing prosperity, with almost equal solicitude and satisfaction. For by supporting this Institution, and perpetu-

ating and extending its usefulness, the rich may, with the greatest ease and advantage, discharge a great debt of humanity, which they owe to one of the most helpless, pitiable, and interesting, classes of the poor; while these again here meet their generous friends and benefactors, supplying, in the most judicious and liberal manner, every present want, and opening to them the most cheering prospects into the future years of life; and perhaps, into the future ages of their immortal existence, which were before overcast with clouds of the deepest gloom and despondence.

To the promotion of the important objects which this excellent Institution embraces; shall we not then feel ourselves impelled to improve a portion of the bounty of Heaven, which has been bestowed upon us, by all the powerful and persuasive motives, by which, in such cases, our hearts and our conduct ought to be influenced?

These motives are numerous and various. But it may suffice, at present, to suggest only two or three of primary weight and efficacy.

Let it then be recollected, that we are only stewards of those riches, or of that portion of good things, with which we are favoured by a beneficent Providence.

It is equally the dictate of reason and revelation, that "every good gift," every desirable advantage and comfort which we enjoy, "cometh down from the Father of lights." Nothing but the most pitiable ignorance, or the most insufferable pride, can for a moment hesitate in subscribing to the truth of what the language of Divine Inspiration every where teaches; that all which is in heaven, and in the earth, belongeth to the great parent and sovereign of the universe; that

he reigneth over all in the exercise of an absolute dominion; that riches and honor come from him; and that it is he, in short, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy.

Has he "loaded us with his benefits," or has he supplied us with more than a sufficiency to satisfy our own reasonable wants? In what light are we to consider; in what manner are we to improve, the bounty of our heavenly Parent's hand? Are his favours granted to us, as our absolute property? And may we use them in all respects as we please? Are they not, on the contrary, evidently committed to us as a trust, which we hold at the pleasure of their Author, and which we are bound to employ according to his will? And has he not most clearly manifested it to be his will, that we should never forget to do good, according to the means with which he has furnished us, by communicating to others, whose necessities may be supplied from our abundance?

This he teaches us by the most conspicuous objects which he presents to our view in the heavens, wherein his glory is eminently displayed; while we there behold the sun diffusing his cheering light and vivifying heat, over the various regions of our earth, which without his friendly beams, would be one vast, dreary, barren wilderness; and while we there see the clouds pouring down the plentiful rain to refresh the thirsty ground, to revive the languishing plants, and replenish the failing fountains and streams of water.

This he teaches us still more clearly by his own example; while he opens continually his liberal hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing, with the good suited to their respective natures; and is con-

stantly doing good, more especially, to the children of men; for whose souls he has provided the inestimable blessings of redemption through the riches of his grace in his beloved Son; and whose hearts he fills with joy and gladness, through the various excellent supplies with which they are furnished by his providential care and bounty.

And this he teaches us, in the plainest manner, by his written word which speaks a language the most unequivocal and decisive; "charging them that are rich in this world, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," to those who need the supplies which they can conveniently spare.

How important and precious is the trust thus committed to the rich: And in a ready and faithful discharge of this, with what honour do they appear, as the appointed dispensers of the bounty of the great and beneficent Lord of heaven and earth, to their fellowmen!

Let us also recollect; that to our Lord we must give an account of our stewardship; and that we must expect to meet his displeasure or approbation, and to receive from him an everlasting recompense, correspondent to the manner in which we have fulfilled the trust reposed in us.

This, the suggestions of reason and conscience lead us to expect; and what can be more worthy of the character of the great Proprietor and Ruler of the universe; or what more wisely adapted to secure the fidelity, and cherish the benevolence of individuals, and to promote the order, harmony and happiness of society? This we are accordingly taught among the fundamental doctrines of Divine Revelation, which

testifies, that our Lord will shortly come and reckon with us, and bring every work into judgment, whether it be good or bad, with a view to render unto all according to what they have done.

You need not be here informed, as you well know, how awful is the prospect for eternity, which the inspired volume opens to those, who penuriously hoard, or riotously waste, their Lord's goods, instead of applying them to the worthy purposes for which they are intrusted to their care.

But what on the other hand, can be better calculated to animate to unwearied constancy, and more abundant labours in well doing, than the view which the same word of truth and grace gives of the final happy lot of those, who on the principles of a truly christian faith and love, the only principles, from which any genuine good work in man can flow, have acceptably "honored the Lord with their substance;" while it presents them standing with holy boldness before him in the day of judgment, and in the midst of the assembled universe of intelligent creatures, receiving from his gracious lips, that most honorable plaudit and welcome sentence; "Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

Who would not aspire to be found among the happy number, whom the King of glory, shall thus distinguish with the highest immortal honors, and thus receive to the fullness of everlasting joy in his presence? Let this be our generous, our sacred ambition. Under the influence of that love to our brethren, which is produced by the love of God our Saviour, let it be our care,

that according to our abilities, we may sow plentifully in all judicious charitable distributions, to the children of want; persuaded, that what we thus do, our Lord will kindly acknowledge as done to himself; and assured, that then, in due season, through the riches of his grace, we shall reap an abundant harvest of immortal glory and felicity in his heavenly kingdom.

Let it be further considered, that while we are thus improving the means which we possess for contributing to the relief and comfort of the indigent and afflicted classes of our fellow-mortals, we are at the same time providing most effectually for the promotion of our own present happiness.

For the truth of this may I not with confidence appeal to all who have made the experiment? Have not you, who have been particularly distinguished by the bounty of heaven, found "the luxury of doing good," the most exquisite that riches can supply? When have you tasted the highest and sweetest satisfactions, that you have ever found in the use of your worldly possessions? Has it not been in seasons when, in the exercise of a discreet and liberal charity, you have shared them with the poor, the destitute and distressed? Has it not been, when you have sought, found and relieved, real, and perhaps more than common worth, fallen from the enjoyment of more prosperous days, into circumstances of difficulty and perplexity, and yet too diffident to obtrude itself on the notice of the public, and too modest even to accept of offered assistance, unless when afforded in a way the most tender and delicate; when, in more ordinary cases you have "dealt your bread to the hungry, and clothed the naked; when you have taken the poor that were cast

out, into your houses;" or have aided the community in providing for them such an hospitable shelter, and such comfortable accommodations as this house affords; or when you have furnished to the ignorant, the means of the most necessary and useful instruction, relative to the affairs of this life, and the concerns of their everlasting salvation?

In the performance of such worthy and generous deeds, have you not experienced pleasures heart-felt, and refined, far surpassing all that you have ever enjoyed in the entertainments of the most sumptuous table, or in the dazzling shew of the most splendid dress or equipage, or in the accommodations of the most magnificent and richly furnished mansion? Are not the pleasures, which attend and follow such charitable and beneficent services, the pleasures that always bear a review; and that are enjoyed over again with the sweetest sensations on every renewed recollection?

Do not these give a double relish to every other enjoyment of a state of affluence, which moderation and temperance allow, and which reason and religion approve and sanction? And does not the remembrance of these also sensibly tend to lighten the gloom, and sweeten the sorrows of the heaviest afflictions, when the common joys of the world are gone, driven like chaff before the stormy winds of a day of adversity? When the greatest and worthiest of all the men of the east, in his day, was fallen from the highest pinnacle of worldly felicity, into the lowest depths of worldly trouble and sorrow, how soothing, how consoling must it have been to his deeply wounded and bleeding heart, to look back with an approving conscience up-

on his conduct in the time of his eminent prosperity; to recollect how he had improved his vast possessions, his distinguishing honors, his great power and influence, "in causing the widow's heart to sing for joy; in shewing himself a father to the fatherless and the poor; in becoming eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; and in delivering the oppressed, and defending the cause of those who had none to help them!" Is the joy of the most abundant harvest; or is the rejoicing of men when they exult in the honors of victory, and divide the richest spoil of their conquered enemies, to be once compared with the satisfactions and consolations which this great and good man must have felt, under the most distressing vicissitudes to which human life is liable, when he could thus reflect upon the worthy part which he had acted, in his brighter and more prosperous days, towards the necessitous and the afflicted of every description, in consequence of which "the blessings of many ready to perish had come upon him," in the richest abundance, and with the kindliest influence?

If there be indeed pleasures worthy of the rational nature of man, and becoming the dignified character of christians, to be drawn from the use of the good things of the world, they must surely be such as these which are experienced in the performance of those beneficent actions, and in the steady pursuit of that course of well-doing, in which the children of men are called to shew themselves merciful, as their Father in heaven is merciful, and to be followers of the Divine Redeemer, who went about continually doing good; bestowing, with the most bountiful hand, blessings temporal and spiritual, upon the destitute, the afflicted, the penitent, the

disconsolate ; and who thus enforced by his most persuasive example, what he taught his disciples by the noblest precept, saying, " *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*"

Is not the exercise of this beneficence forcibly recommended also, by the consideration, that instead of wasting, it promises rather an increase of, the resources by which it is supported ?

In this case, I feel no hesitation in asserting, that constant observation and experience accord with, and confirm, the testimony of the sacred word of God, which declares ; that " there is that scattereth," meaning in charitable distributions, " and yet increaseth :" that " the liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand ;" and that when any give with a prudent generosity to the support and relief of suffering humanity, and the promotion of the designs and institutions of genuine benevolence, and real utility, it shall be given to them again, " good measure, pressed down, and running over." " Thus he hath said, who cannot deceive us." And there are perhaps no assurances and promises, of the word of God, more evidently and remarkably fulfilled than these in the view of all who observe the course of Providence.

The most benevolent and charitable are not exempted from the common adverse occurrences of life, which come alike to all ; " excepting that they come with the evidences and blessings of a heavenly Father's love to his children ; while, with all other things, they work for their good. But if those who have, according to their abilities, abounded in the works of mercy and charity, should ever be reduced to circumstances of want and

distress, they may with peculiar confidence expect to experience from their fellow-men, the compassion and assistance, which they have rendered to others, in a similar situation; or they may rest assured, that the Lord himself will, in a more immediate way, speedily deliver them, or graciously strengthen them, and support them, in the time of their trouble.

Has it been hitherto your happy lot, instead of experiencing those adverse changes to which all are liable, to minister rather to the relief of those who are suffering under them? And have you not found, that through the manifest interpositions of God's good Providence, securing to you the favour and friendship of your fellow-men, or in other ways remarkably directing your counsels and undertakings, and crowning your labours with success, he has abundantly verified to you his sacred word, by which, with the most condescending goodness, he represents those who consider, and pity, and relieve the poor, as lending to himself; and has engaged to pay again to such, what they have given?

Frequent and various are the occasions, on which you are called to help the poor, whom you have always with you; and to give your aid to the support of institutions, more or less private or public, designed to minister to the relief of the necessitous and the suffering, to advance the interests of literature and religion, and to promote the welfare and happiness of individuals, and of society. Such occasions have, I doubt not, been regarded by you in one view, as desirable opportunities offered, in the course of Divine Providence, for testifying your gratitude to the bountiful Author of all your enjoyments, and the generous zeal with which you are ready to do good to all men, to whom

the benign influence of your philanthropy, can be extended. And have you had cause to apprehend, that your success was interrupted, or your prosperity impaired, in consequence of what you thus dedicated to the honor of God, and the benefit of your fellow-men? Have you not, on the contrary, found the blessing of the Lord visibly attending your lawful business and pursuits, and his bountiful hand, soon and signally, replenishing your treasures, and abundantly making up to you, what you had expended on proper principles, in such worthy and useful services; and often by means entirely unforeseen, and from sources altogether unexpected?

The present occasion affords another interesting opportunity for manifesting, that you have not become weary in well doing.

You have planted here a most valuable tree in a fertile and well prepared soil. Distinguished by the favour of heaven shining upon it with the kindest beams, it has taken root, and grown, and flourished, in a degree, perhaps, surpassing your first most sanguine expectations. Under its wide-spreading shade, how many houseless wanderers, have been most comfortably sheltered from the consuming heat, and desolating storms of adversity; and by its pleasant, nourishing fruits, how many feeble travellers, in some of the most rugged and uncertain paths of life, have been most seasonably cheered and refreshed; when ready to faint and perish!

That it may still live and grow and flourish, and yield its precious fruits without diminution, and in yet richer abundance; it must be still watered again and again, by the same fostering hand of charity, which has

already done so much towards rearing it to that degree of vigor and utility, to which it has already risen. And thus, I doubt not, you are on this occasion prepared again to contribute to its support, and to the increase of its strength and fruitfulness.

In this persuasion I commend it, with the most pleasing confidence and animating hope, to your continued kind attention and beneficent care ; and above all, to the protection and favour of his gracious Providence, by whose blessing it has been hitherto so signally prospered, and through whose good hand alone it can still be perpetuated, and carried forward to that full maturity, and extensive usefulness, to which it may yet be advanced.

But before I conclude this address, I hope I may be indulged a little longer, by the candor and patience of this respectable assembly, while I attempt to suggest, in the plainest language, a few words of admonition and exhortation, to the children of this Asylum.

My young friends. There are I trust a number of you, who are able to understand what I now wish to say to you. Hear me then, with attention ; and may the Lord graciously dispose your hearts to feel and improve what you hear.

Many of you are orphan children, deprived, at a time when you were least capable of taking care of yourselves, of the parents who might naturally have been expected to be your best earthly friends. Others of you, though not thus bereaved of your parents, were, while left with them, subjected to so many disadvantages, that you seemed to have no good reason to hope, that you would ever be well provided for in the things of this world, or trained up in the way which leads to the happiness of the life to come.

But when you were in these unhappy circumstances, your Heavenly Father, who is equally the Maker of the rich and the poor, and with whom there is no respect of persons, was pleased to pity you, and to shew you mercy. Having the hearts of all men in his hands, he inclined the hearts of those who were able to help you, to view your case with the feelings of a tender compassion, and to build for you, and such as you are, this spacious and excellent house, where, during the most helpless years of your life, you are provided with comfortable lodging, food and clothing, and are committed to the direction of well qualified governors and teachers. Under their care you are kept out of the way of many sins and temptations, which might, in other circumstances, have ruined you in body and soul, and made you miserable in time and through eternity ; and by their instructions you may obtain such an education, as will prepare you for learning and pursuing, in due time, some honest trade or business, by which you may hereafter live reputably and comfortably in the world. But what you should reckon among the greatest advantages of your present situation, is, that you are here particularly taught to read the Bible, the best book in the world, it having been written by wise and good men, in obedience to the command of God, and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. By reading and understanding this book, you may learn to know the God who made you ; and the Saviour who died to redeem you from sin and from everlasting misery ; and what you must do to please and honor your Maker and Redeemer in this world, and to obtain eternal life and blessedness with him in the world to come.

Think of these things, and consider how thankful you ought to be to the good friends who have generously taken so much care, and been at so great an expense, for your present and eternal welfare; and how thankful especially you ought to be, to the great and blessed God, who disposes and enables these friends to shew you so much kindness, and whose mercies to you are so many and so great.

Are your youthful hearts tenderly affected, when you think how much better and more desirable your situation is here, than that of thousands of other poor children in the world? And are you ready to say, How shall we shew our gratitude, to our kind benefactors, who have done, and who are still doing so much for our comfort and benefit?

Let me tell you; that the most pleasing return which you can make to them, will be, to give them the satisfaction of seeing you concerned and endeavouring to do well for yourselves. Greatly indeed would they be disappointed and grieved, if they should see you turn out thoughtless, wicked, and useless creatures, determined to go on in the broad road of vice and folly, which leads down to everlasting death and destruction. But how great will be the pleasure and joy of their hearts, if they see you, by your general good behaviour, and especially by a serious attention to the duties of religion and morality, promising fair to act your part well in the stations in which Providence may place you in this world, and to secure your interest in a better and more enduring inheritance in heaven, than the richest can possess on earth.

Would you also know what you shall render to the Lord, the God of your mercies, for delivering you from

the many evils to which you were lately exposed, and favouring you with the many and great advantages, which you here enjoy?

Let me then remind you, that you ought to feel your hearts engaged, by all his goodness and mercy which you have experienced; to remember your Creator and Redeemer in the days of your youth; to remember him, so as to fear and love him, to devote yourselves to his service, and to seek your happiness in his favour, even now in the morning of your days. This is certainly your most reasonable duty, which you owe to your Heavenly Father, and blessed Saviour. If you desire thus to fear and love him, and begin thus early to seek and serve him, you may well hope that he will love you; that you will find him your best friend, and that he will delight to bless you, and rejoice over you in doing you good.

Seek him then with all your hearts, while he may be found. Pray earnestly, every day, to your Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus your Redeemer, for his Holy Spirit, which he is most ready to give to them who ask him, that you may be taught by Him to know the Lord as your God, and enabled to believe in Christ the Son of God as your Saviour; and that you may be led and kept in the peaceful, pleasant ways of his holy religion, to his heavenly kingdom.

If you thus pray, the Lord will hear you, and grant you the mercy and grace which you seek, and bless you exceedingly abundantly above all that you can ask or think.

The great Lord of heaven and earth, will then be your Father, and will be unspeakably better to you, than the richest and best parents on earth can be to

their beloved children. And then also, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is particularly pleased to see little children coming to him, who takes them with the greatest tenderness into the arms of his mercy, and into the bosom of his love, and delights to bless them and make them happy forever; who, for the sake of making poor sinners rich in the inheritance of his heavenly kingdom, once condescended to become so poor on earth, that he had not a place of comfortable lodging where he might lay his head to rest; this great and gracious and blessed Redeemer, will be your Saviour and your friend, will provide in the best manner for all your wants, guide you in the right way, make all things work for your good, while you live in this world, and at last when you die, will receive you to behold his glory in heaven, and to enjoy with him all the rich and precious blessings of his grace and love, through all the ages of eternity.

Would you, in short, desire to enjoy the favour of God and men; and that it may be well with you both now and forever. Let it then be your constant care and endeavour, to behave yourselves in all respects suitably to the station in which you are here placed, and as worthy of the priviledges whichyou here enjoy.

Observe carefully the rules and orders made for the government of your conduct while you remain inhabitants of this house.

Respect, honor, and pray for, all who have the care of you, and are studying to make your situation comfortable, and to promote your present and everlasting welfare.

Attend to the good instructions of your teachers, and especially to what you may learn by reading the

word of God, concerning your duty to Him, to yourselves, and to all around you.

Never let the language of profane cursing and swearing, of lying or rudeness, or any other wicked and shameful words, be heard from your lips.

Live in peace, love, and friendship with each other, as it becomes the children of one family, sharing together in the same goodness and mercy of the Lord, and in the same favour and bounty of the public, by which you have been kindly adopted.

And let your humble, modest, orderly conduct, at all times and in every place, shew that you are evidently improved in your dispositions and manners, by the advantages which you enjoy in this happy habitation of charity, this desirable Asylum of the orphan, and of the children of want and affliction.

Remember and do these things; And may that gracious God, who is the Father of the fatherless, and who delivereth the poor, and setteth them on high from affliction, be pleased to bless you, and to keep you, and to make you truly good, useful and happy in this life; and to grant, that though you should continue among the poor of this world, you may become rich in faith, and heirs of the heavenly kingdom, which he has promised to them that love him.

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FILLED WITH HIS GLORY.

A SERMON,

DELIVERED

ON THE OCCASION OF OPENING FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP,

THE NEW CIRCULAR EDIFICE,

ON MEETING STREET,

BUILT FOR THE SERVICE OF GOD

BY THE

INDEPENDENT, OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, IN

CHARLESTON S. CAROLINA.

ON THE LORD'S DAY, IN THE AFTERNOON,

MAY 25, 1806.

CHARLESTON, May 26th, 1806. AT a church meeting this day held in the Circular Church, on Meeting Street On motion seconded, it was resolved, that the thanks of the Church be presented to the two Pastors, the Rev. Doctors Hollinshead and Keith, for their suitable discourses, delivered yesterday on the opening of this circular new building. And that they be requested to furnish copies of the same, in order that they may be printed; and that they also be requested to prepare an historic sketch of the Church, from its origin to the present time, to be prefixed to them; and also historical sketches of all its Ministers, as far as the same can be obtained from our elder Members, and other sources of authentic information.

GEORGE SMITH, *Sec'y.*

Extract from the Minutes.

Neither of these Discourses was published, (though the one which follows, was prepared for the press by its Author) as the "historical sketches" requested, were not furnished to accompany them. This labour has since been performed by the late DR DAVID RAMSAY, one of the most intelligent, active and useful members of this Church and Congregation, whose talents, information, and industry, qualified him eminently to execute such a work. EDITOR.

SERMON.

HAGGAI II. 7.

AND I WILL SHAKE ALL NATIONS, AND THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS SHALL COME: AND I WILL FILL THIS HOUSE WITH GLORY, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.

To see the house in which we are now assembled, filled with the glory of the Lord, would certainly fill the heart of every genuine worshipper in it, with a most peculiar joy.

For this every friend of Zion among us, may well be expected, humbly and devoutly to pray. And if their prayers, in respect to this, should be graciously answered, they would doubtless consider themselves as favoured with the most desirable ground for fervent thanksgiving and praise. Without this, indeed, the most commodious, elegant, and magnificent edifice, erected for the worship of God, would remain destitute of that distinction, which would constitute its highest honor, its only real value; while the simplest structure, thus distinguished, would be truly honorable and amiable in the view of all who prefer the tokens of the Lord's presence and favour, to the most admired display of human art, or of worldly pomp and splendour.

In the earlier ages of the world, it does not appear, that the Lord had any other temples prepared for his worship, than the pure and pious hearts of those whom his own grace had prepared "to worship him in spirit

and in truth ;" and their sacrifices, prayers, and praises, were offered to him in the open air ; sometimes under the refreshing shade of a tree, or within the agreeable covert of a grove, where the scene, naturally tranquil and solemn, would invite to the exercises of devotion. In these circumstances was the worship of God attended by Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, and all the pious fathers, who lived before the flood ; by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his sons, the twelve patriarchs ; and by all who walked with God, in succeeding ages, until the time of the sojourning of the Israelites in the wilderness, on their way from Egypt to the promised land. During that period, the chosen people of God were formed into a more regular church state, under the ceremonial dispensation, established by the ministry of Moses. Then the Lord was pleased to order the construction of a moveable Tabernacle, suited to the circumstances of the people, while sojourning in tents. This Tabernacle, in its various parts, and with its peculiar furniture, was designed and adapted to represent the present condition of the church in the world, as favoured with the means of redemption and grace ; yet continuing imperfect, subject to many vicissitudes, and destined to pass through the humiliating scene of dissolution in the hour of death, to the full perfection and eternal glory of the heavenly state.

Within this Tabernacle, among other articles appropriated to the service of God, and typical of spiritual things, the sacred Ark, containing the covenant of God, was deposited ; while above it rested the cloud of glory, which was the striking and impressive symbol of the Divine presence, with which it was honored. To this, as the chosen and consecrated habitation of the

God of Israel, were the people required to resort, when they held their solemn assemblies; and here the principal sacred services, which constituted their public worship, were ordered to be performed.

After the settlement of Israel in the land of Canaan, this venerable Tabernacle was, in process of time, succeeded by, and gave place to, the celebrated Temple, built by Solomon, about one thousand years before the Christian era. As this temple was built according to a pattern given by the Spirit of God to David, and by him delivered to his son Solomon; as it was constructed with the most substantial and costly materials, and finished with the most exquisite taste and workmanship; as it contained the ancient Tabernacle, with all its sacred furniture, and was distinguished by similar tokens of the Divine presence and favour; and as it was a type of the incarnate Redeemer, it was unquestionably the most remarkable and glorious edifice, ever erected by the hands of men. This magnificent Temple, having stood about four hundred years, was at length, on account of the sins of the people, given into the hands of their enemies, the Chaldeans: by them it was stripped of all its splendid ornaments and rich treasures, and then reduced to a pile of melancholy ruins: while the nation, whose pride and boast it had been, were led away to suffer the calamities of a seventy years captivity in Babylon.

On the restoration of the Jews, at the end of that term, to their own land, the rebuilding of their Temple was undertaken; and in the midst of many difficulties, and great opposition from hostile neighbours, it was carried on during the space of about twenty years, till it was at length completed, and dedicated to the service of God.

This *second Temple* was, in many respects, greatly inferior to the *first*. Hence, when the foundation of it was laid, many, on this interesting occasion, shouted aloud for joy; there were many, on the other hand, of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers that were ancient men, and had seen the first house, who wept with a loud voice, while they perceived how far this house would probably fall short of the former, in beauty and grandeur. Thus they discouraged the people, in the arduous work which they had begun; and it appears that the building proceeded heavily and slowly, and was attended with frequent interruptions, and much unnecessary delay.

In these circumstances the prophet Haggai, by a Divine commission, was sent to them for the purposes of reproving their negligence, and animating them in their undertaking. He accordingly reminded them, that, on account of their suffering "the house of the Lord to lie waste, while they dwelt at ease in their own ceiled houses," the Lord had visited them with unfavourable seasons, and blasted their hopes from the fruits of the earth. Then with a view to excite them to resume and prosecute the work with alacrity and diligence, he assures them, that in this case, "the Lord would be with them, as he had been with their forefathers," to prosper and to bless them; and that he would take pleasure, and be glorified, in the house which they should build. To obviate the discouragement which they felt from the consideration, that *this house* must appear as nothing, in comparison, in the eyes of those who had seen the *first house* in its glory, he directs their views to an event in its nature, the most important and interesting that ever took place in the world; an event which

would occur, during the existence of this second Temple, and which would give a greater glory to this latter house, than any which belonged to the former. For to this house, the long expected Messiah would come; even that Divine Saviour, who is described as "the Desire of all nations," because in him all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, and to him would they all, in due time, look with ardent desire, as their consolation and hope, their salvation and glory. His coming, they are encouraged to expect, "in a little while;" within a short space of time, compared with the years that had passed; the centuries that had rolled away, since the first promise of salvation in him to fallen man. In this view, soon would that "shaking of the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land, and of all the nations," take place, which signified those great political convulsions and revolutions that would terminate in the extension and establishment of the Roman empire over the principal nations, commonly called the whole world; and more especially, that great change in the Jewish church and state, which would include the abrogation of their ritual law, and the introduction of the Christian dispensation, that was to endure to the end of the world. Then, in the fulness of the time appointed, and in the circumstances ordained to attend his appearance in the world, the Messiah would come to this second Temple, and by his presence, fill that house with a glory far surpassing all the external magnificence and splendour, by which the first Temple was distinguished.

This promise, made more than five hundred years before the coming of Christ in the flesh, was in its time fulfilled; when, as the Apostle testifies, "The Word was

made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Then was this promise realized in that house, which was not long afterwards completely destroyed and laid waste, together with the city of Jerusalem, in which it stood. Then did the sceptre of government totally depart from Judah, and the Jewish nation, divested of the high honor and sacred privileges, which belong to the church of God, were scattered abroad among all the other nations of the earth; and in all places of their dispersion, they have, for more than seventeen centuries, continued under those awful frowns of heaven, which visibly and strongly mark their peculiar guilt, in rejecting their Messiah, and crucifying the Saviour of the world; and from which they will not be delivered, "till they shall return and seek the Lord and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

Since that memorable period, the Temple of the Lord has been in every place, where the exalted Redeemer, for whom the pious formerly "waited, as the consolation and glory of Israel," and who was "set to be a light of the Gentiles, that he might be for salvation to the ends of the earth," finds any number, even two or three of the church, which he has bought with his blood, gathered together in his name, for the purposes of waiting upon him in the ordinances of his grace, and of offering the homage of their worship, to God in him, according to the rules of his word.

Considering then the promise in our text, in the true spirit of it, as applicable to every place in which the disciples and friends of Christ are assembled, and engaged in the exercises of Christian worship; may we

not now cherish the pleasing, animating hope, that this house, which we have prepared for the worship of our God and Saviour, and which we are this day dedicating to his holy service, may be *filled with his glory?*

The observations which have been already suggested, will lead us to consider the presence of the Lord, as constituting the glory with which we should desire to see the house of his worship filled.

That our desire of seeing this, may be the more rational, pure, and animated, by being directed to its proper object: I shall now endeavour to shew,

I. What we are to understand by the presence of the Lord, in the house or place where he is worshipped.

II. In what respects the presence of the Lord may be expected to fill the house or place of his worship with glory.

I. What we are to understand by the presence of the Lord in the house or place where he is worshipped.

The presence of the Lord is indeed every where; and there is no place in which his glory is not displayed, or may not be perceived by the eye of reason or of faith. "Am I a God at hand, and not afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."* Impressed with this grand and awful truth, the Psalmist exclaims, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit; or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, even there shall thine hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."†

* Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. † Psalm cxxxix. 7—10.

These things are spoken of the essential, universal presence of Jehovah.

But the subject of our present meditations, leads us to consider rather his special presence, or the peculiar manifestations of himself, which he grants to those whom he condescends to favour and to bless. The presence of the Lord, in this sense, constitutes the heavenly state of glory and felicity, in which Daniel saw, in prophetic vision, an innumerable multitude of holy and happy spirits ministering to the Lord, and ten thousand times ten thousand, standing before him.* And of this David speaks, in language the most animated and expressive, when he says, "In thy presence, is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures forever more."†

The presence of the Lord, in this sense, is not however confined to heaven. It is vouchsafed also to his people on earth. "For thus saith the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, and whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also, that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."‡ To the same purpose his word assures us, that he draws nigh to them who draw nigh to him.‖ And the experience of the pious, co-incides with his word, in pronouncing the persons blessed, whom the Lord chooses and causes to approach unto him, that they may dwell in his courts, or wait upon him in the ordinances of his worship.§ In this view, also, he has graciously promised to his people, saying, "In all

* Dan. vii. 10. † Psalm xvi. 11. ‡ Isai. lvii. 15 ‖ Jam. iv. 8.

§ Psalm lxv.

places where I record my name," or where he appoints his worship to be attended, "I will come unto thee, and bless thee."*

Now it is to this manifestation of the special, gracious presence of the Lord, by which he comes to his people, in the communication of the blessings of his favour, that our views are to be directed, when we contemplate his presence, as filling his house, or the place of his worship, with glory. And the spirit of our text leads us to regard the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person in the adorable Trinity, as being, in a peculiar sense, the Lord, who thus comes to the house or place where his church assemble, for the purposes of religious worship. As in Christ all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily ;† so it is in his person, and through his mediation, that all the gracious manifestations of God are made to fallen man. And it is by the communication of the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in the name of Christ, that the Divine presence is thus granted to those who are favoured with it. It was accordingly to this presence of *Christ the Lord*, that the faith and hope of the Jews were directed in our text, when it was promised, that the Temple which they were then building, should be filled with his glory. Conformably to this idea, it is of those who constitute his church, which he came to redeem and sanctify, to establish and to build up in the world, that Christ himself speaks, when he says, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them :" and when, on another occasion, to his chosen ministers, whom he gave to his church for its edification, he delivered that most comprehensive and encouraging

* Exod. xx. 24. † Col. ii. 9.

promise, saying, "Lo! *I* am with you always, even unto the end of the world."*

How much is it to be desired, that this glorious Lord and Saviour of the church, may be graciously present with us, whenever we come together, with the pious design of joining in the exercises of Divine worship in this house!

And if there be found among us, a number of real believers, although not exceeding two or three, who, on the occasions of their assembling here, sincerely and earnestly desire to be thus favoured with the presence of their Lord, they may with humble confidence expect, that he will come, and fill this house with his glory.

Let us now proceed to consider,

II. In what respects the presence of the Lord, may be expected to fill the house of his worship with glory.

The presence of the Lord fills the house of his worship with glory,

1. As in the enjoyment of his presence his worshippers are led to behold and contemplate, with peculiar satisfaction, the glory of his infinite perfections, displayed in the salvation of fallen man.

To those who are prepared to "worship the Father in Spirit and in truth," the infinite excellencies of the Divine Nature are manifested through Jesus Christ, in a manner the most pleasing and attractive.

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person."† Being one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, he possesses equally every perfection and glory of Deity. Hence it is said, that "the name

* Mat. xviii. 20; Mat. xxviii. 20. † Heb. i. 3.

of God is in him ;"* and he is called the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." He is declared, also, to be " God over all, blessed forever."†

But in his person, the nature of man, in order to the accomplishment of the great work of man's redemption, was assumed into a most mysterious and wonderful union with the nature of God ; and in Him the bright perfections of Deity are presented to our minds through the softening veil of humanity, so blended, as it were with the created excellencies of human nature, that in Him we may contemplate the glory of God, not only without being overwhelmed with the view, but with the sweetest and highest satisfaction of soul. As his name is called Immanuel, because he is " God with us," even " God manifest in the flesh :" so " they who see him," with the eye of faith, " see the Father also."‡ They see the Father, not in his absolute character of infinite power, holiness, justice and truth, appearing as " a consuming fire," to the guilty sons of men ; but as " the Father of mercies, and the God of all grace ;" as the God whose nature is " Love."

While in Christ they behold the mercy and truth of God met together, and righteousness and peace embracing each other,‖ in the great design of recovering fallen man from sin and condemnation, to holiness and peace with God ; while in this adorable Mediator of the new covenant, they behold the amazing condescensions and displays of love, of love Divine, of love surpassing all expression, and exceeding all comprehension ; love

* Exod. xxiii. 21. † 1 Tim. 6. 15 ; Rom. ix. 5. ‡ John xiv. 9.

‖ Psalm lxxxv. 10.

providing a sacrifice of infinite value and efficacy for the expiation of human guilt, and the satisfaction of Divine justice; love reconciling sinners, chargeable with the most unprovoked rebellion, and the most provoking crimes, to their offended Creator and Sovereign; love, from eternity embracing the most unworthy, and raising the most vile and wretched from the depths of pollution and misery, and the borders of hell and despair, to the high privileges of the sons of God, on earth, and to thrones of glory, in his presence, in Heaven; they are, by the constraining influence of this great and wonderful love of God, led to say with the Apostle, surely "God is love."* And when the Son of God, in whom the love of God thus shines, in all its own attractive splendours, vouchsafes, according to his promise, to be in the midst of those who are met together in his name, for the purposes of religious worship, he fills the place in which they are assembled with glory, by a most pleasing display of the glory of God, which thus shines in his face. Hence they are led to pronounce a day in his courts, where he thus manifests himself, to those who humbly and devoutly wait upon him, better than a thousand spent in the ordinary occupations and enjoyments of life.

II. The presence of the Lord fills his house with glory, as it gives efficacy and success to the means of grace dispensed in it, by which his name is eminently glorified.

When a house is built for the Lord, and dedicated to him, it is to be considered as solemnly set apart to the special purpose of accommodating his worshippers in their attendance upon the ordinances of his

* John iv. 8.

grace, and those exercises of devotion, which he has appointed, as the necessary and the best means for promoting the salvation of sinners, and the edification of his people. And if in compliance with this sacred and important design, it be religiously improved, and the worship of God be devoutly attended in it, and faithfully maintained on the principles, and according to the rules, of his word, it may then, with propriety, be called, *The House of the Lord*; and he will assuredly honor it with his presence, and the manifestations of his glory.

In such an house "he records his name," while there he appoints those ordinances to be observed, which bear witness to their Divine Author, especially, as they display the greatness of his love, and the riches of his grace; and to those, who in the place where his name is thus recorded, humbly wait upon him in the exercise of faith and hope, and with the temper of love and obedience, he will come and bless them. This he will do by the communication of his Spirit, to make these ordinances effectual to the promotion of their present spiritual improvement, and of their future everlasting happiness. Thus will they be most essentially benefitted, and his name be eminently glorified.

The House of the Lord is designed to be an "House of prayer for all people."* There his worshippers are allowed and called "by prayer and supplication, with thanksgivings, to make known their requests," for themselves and each other, and for all men. And when the Lord is present in his house, he pours out upon those who humbly and devoutly wait upon him, "the Spirit of grace and supplications."† And to

* Isaiah lvi. 7. † Zech. xii. 10.

their prayers, thus inspired by his Spirit, offered up according to the directions of his word, through the mediation of his Son, "He who heareth prayer," will vouchsafe a listening ear; and in answering the prayer of faith, he will shew himself "able and willing to do exceeding abundantly, above all that they can ask or think."* There, also, offering their sacrifices of thanksgiving to his name, with that affecting view of his glorious perfections and wonderful works, and of his innumerable and most precious benefits, temporal and spiritual, which they have experienced, or for which they are still allowed to hope, and with that lively impression of the manifold, sacred, and tender obligations by which they are bound, He graciously regards and accepts of "those offerings of their praise, as glorifying him," and he gives them more clear, enlarged, elevated and delightful views of the glories which compose his great name, of the excellencies of his character, of the works and benefits of his hand; and of that peculiar "goodness of his House, which eminently constitutes the glory with which he fills the place of his worship, and in which his sincere worshippers rejoice with the highest satisfaction and delight.

Another object for which we are to assemble in the house of the Lord, is to attend on the ministry of his word. The word of the Lord, contained in the sacred volumes of the Old and New Testaments, was originally spoken and written "by holy men, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and "the sacred Scriptures, thus given by inspiration of God, are able, are designed and adapted, to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus; and to be profitable for

* Ephes. iii. 20.

doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the people of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* But that the Scriptures, may the better serve these important purposes, the Lord, in his infinite wisdom and grace, has set apart in his church, an order of men, under the character of his ministers, to preach the word, to declare and explain the truths contained in it, and to present them in the most impressive and persuasive manner, to the minds of their hearers. When he thus commits the ministry of the word to those whom he has chosen, called and qualified by his grace to be his ambassadors; he may be expected to furnish them from time to time with a "supply of his Spirit," proportioned to their work and their wants; and having "this sufficiency derived from God, who makes them able ministers of the New Testament, they are prepared to fulfil their sacred trust, and arduous office, so as "to save themselves and those who hear them."†

And when, with the spirit of wisdom, fidelity, zeal, and tenderness, becoming their office and station in the church, they "rightly divide the word of truth, keeping back nothing that may be profitable to their hearers;" then is the hand of the Lord usually seen to be "with them;" and his Spirit working by the word, makes it visibly "the power of God to salvation," to some, at least, of those who hear it, and happily conducive, in the case of those who thus feel its saving power, to their advancement in the life of grace, in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour, and conformity to his example, and in the faith, the hope, and the consolations of his gospel. In these admirable and excellent

* 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. † 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6; 1 Tim. iv. 16.

effects of the ministry of his word, honored with his special presence and blessing, how pleasing and desirable are the displays of the glory of the Lord, with which he fills the Temple of his grace!

And when, to the preaching of the word, is added the administration of those holy ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which our Lord has instituted, as the external sacred seals of the covenant of which he is the blessed Mediator; as the solemn memorials of his everlasting love, and of the eternal redemption procured by his death, and as the affecting, assuring pledges of his constant, gracious presence with "his church, which he has bought with his blood," which he sanctifies by his Spirit, and which, by his ordinances in his earthly sanctuary, he prepares and trains up for the inheritance and enjoyment of his everlasting kingdom of glory; how interesting and delightful are the displays of his glory, which we are called to contemplate, in these institutions of his house! And how ardent should be the desires, and how high the satisfaction, of his people, to see his power and glory, thus displayed in the sanctuary of their Saviour and their God!

III. The presence of the Lord fills the house or place of his worship with glory, as it affords, in the exercises of his worship, a delightful foretaste and anticipation of the glory of the heavenly state.

A Christian assembly seriously and devoutly employed in the proper business of the sanctuary, exhibits perhaps the best image of heaven, that can be presented to our view on earth. Gathered together, in the name of their Lord, and favoured with his special presence, while his Spirit descends upon them, to ena-

ble them to perform the holy services in which they are engaged with united hearts, and with devout and fervent affections, they make a near and delightful approach to God, and enter into the spirit of the worship and the joys of the church triumphant in heaven.

When the Lord, by an abundant supply of his Spirit, richly furnishes his ministers with grace and gifts, so that they appear to be themselves clothed with righteousness and salvation, while proclaiming salvation in the blood of the Lamb, to their fellow-men; we are led by this view of his ambassadors, acting by his authority and pleading in his name, to contemplate the Redeemer himself, as from his heavenly throne, sending his angels to testify of his glory, and of his grace to the churches, and condescending to persuade those who hear the voice of his mercy and love, to come unto him, that they may have life, and every one that is a thirst, and that is willing to come and take of the waters of life freely.

Does the gospel, preached in its purity, come to those to whom it is sent, "not in word only, but in power," so that through the Holy Ghost it proves effectual to awaken those who were before sleeping securely in a state of sin and condemnation? Do we, in consequence, observe the anxious eye, and perhaps the starting tear, betraying the painful emotions of an heart deeply impressed with a sense of guilt, an apprehension of danger, and a solicitude to learn the way of salvation? We then see the hopeful indications of immortal souls, excited to fly from the wrath to come, and resolved to enter upon, and to pursue, the way which leadeth to life; and we begin to feel a measure of "the joy that is in heaven over every sinner that repenteth."

When we see those, to whom the gospel, accompanied by the enlightening, renovating energy of the Holy Spirit, has proved the power of God to their salvation, manifesting their experience of this salvation, in the humility and piety, the purity, righteousness, and charity of the christian temper and character; when in the house of the Lord, especially we see the spirit of devotion which animates the truly pious, in the sweetly solemn air which sits on their countenances; when we see their eyes sometimes melting into the tenderest expressions of the gratitude and affection, which they feel towards the God of their mercies, and of their salvation; and of the compassion and love for their particular friends, and for the multitudes around them, whom they ardently desire to be partakers with them of the same blessings of the Divine favour; and when in the face irradiated with a kind of heavenly glory, of which, like Moses, they are not themselves aware, we see the mild beamings of faith and hope, of peace and joy, elevating the soul above all the scenes, the cares, the pleasures of earth and time, to that blessed world, where with their God and Saviour, and all the innumerable company of holy angels, and of the spirits of the just made perfect, they expect to ascend and dwell, and rejoice and triumph forever: when we see these appearances of the presence of the Lord in the midst of his worshipping people, and of his Spirit animating their hearts, in the holy services in which they are engaged in his house, and raising their souls into a near assimilation to the company, to the employments, and to the joys of heaven; and when we ourselves cordially harmonize with such worshippers in their heavenly views and feelings; then do we, in an high degree, perceive

the house of our holy solemnities filled with the glory of the Lord. Then are we, in the desire and prospect of joining, ere long, in the nobler worship in which the church is employed before the throne in heaven, led to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Of the place thus favoured with the presence, and filled with the glory of the Lord, we may well say with Jacob, when in divine vision he beheld a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reaching to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it; "How awful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"* And with the disciples, when they beheld our Lord transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light, and Moses and Elias appeared talking with him, we may say "It is good to be here!" It is good indeed to behold the glory of our Lord here: and this should we ardently desire to see, as often as we come up to the house of the Lord our God.

But as here we cannot long abide, our views and desires, by what we here behold and enjoy, should be raised to that bright world, in which we hope "to see our Lord, as we are seen of him," and with unspeakable triumph and transport, to behold his glory forever.

IMPROVEMENT.

I. Let us, with adoring hearts, recollect and consider the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has condescended to purchase and to sanctify to him-

* Genesis xxviii. 17.

self, a church among men ; and now allows us to hope that he will fill this house, which we have prepared for his service, with his glory.

This adorable God-man, in the character of the Redeemer of the world, was announced to our first parents, immediately after their unhappy fall, in that most gracious and comprehensive promise ; "the seed of the woman, shall bruise the serpent's head;" shall overcome the devil, destroy his works, and restore multitudes of his miserable captives, "to the glorious liberty of the children of God." In this view, he was promised again and again ; and still more plainly and fully from time to time, in the days of the patriarchs. He was then exhibited, in a peculiarly instructive and impressive manner, in the sacrifices and types of the Mosaic dispensation. In succeeding times, his character, his coming and his works ; and the blessings of his salvation were predicted by the prophets, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in a light more clear, and in terms more explicit, until the Spirit of prophesy, began to assume the language of history itself, in speaking of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

At length, in "the fulness of the time," appointed and foretold, He, who in the beginning was with God, and was God ; He by whom all things were made, and by whom they are upheld and governed ; He, who is the Prince of life, and the Lord of glory, came down to our earth, "in the likeness of men, and in the form of a servant ;" yet "manifesting forth his glory, the glory of the only begotten Son of God!" He came *to that second temple*, to which the promise was made, that "the glory of this latter house should be greater

than that of the former," because it should be filled with the glory of his presence, in our nature. He came "to give the knowledge of salvation to his people, by the remission of sins, through the tender mercy of our God;" he came to pour out his blood on the cross, while "he offered himself, through the Eternal Spirit, without spot to God, that he might purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." And having "suffered for our sins, the Just for the unjust," he rose for our justification, and ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, where "he, who was dead, is now alive, and liveth forever more," exalted as "Head over all things to the Church." The Church he so loved, as to give himself for it: this he bought with his own most precious blood, and this he honors with his constant, gracious presence; while by the communication of his Spirit, he still continues with his ministers and his people; and especially comes to them, and meets with them, and favours them with the manifestations of his glory, in every place where they are assembled for his worship, sincerely desirous of drawing near to him, and humbly waiting for his blessing in the ordinances of his gospel.

Are there, in the congregation for whose accommodation this house has been built, a number of those "who have, through the Divine Mediator, access by the Spirit to the Father," as their God, and the God of their salvation, who are now "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God!" who are "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; Jesus Christ himself, being the chief corner stone!" Of such there are, I doubt not, a precious number to be found among

us, constituting a living branch of that genuine, holy, catholic church, which is as old as the first promise of the Messiah, made to fallen man. With humble confidence then, may we of this church hope, that "our Lord will be with us," and that he will fill with his glory, this house, erected for his worship, and dedicated to his service.

"But will God indeed dwell on earth? Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee! How much less this house which we have builded!"

Yet will he in the condescensions of his grace, vouchsafe to come and meet, in this house, as many as sincerely desire his presence here; and these he will bless according to the promises of his word.

Thus may he be expected to distinguish this house, not on account of any beauty, or excellence, or advantage belonging to the edifice itself; but because here he may be glorified; while here sinners are brought to experience the enlightening, saving power of his gospel; and while here, believers are, by the culture of the ordinances of his grace, trained up for future glory.

II. Let us be excited and animated to the faithful and cheerful performance of the important duties required of us, as we would hope to see this house filled with glory.

Let us gratefully feel and acknowledge our obligations to the Lord, "by whose good hand upon us, we are brought hitherto," and are now allowed to appear before him, and to attend on the exercises of his worship in this house.

From a small beginning, our church, under many difficulties, has become "greatly increased in its latter end."

The old house of worship, lately removed from the ground on which this new edifice stands, within the rec-

ollection of some of you, was of but little more than half the size, to which it was afterwards enlarged. From the congregation worshipping in that first small and simple building, a considerable proportion, on account of a difference in sentiment on some points of church government, withdrew and formed the Presbyterian Church in this city, which has become the numerous and respectable body, which you see, under that name at this day. Yet the growth of the original congregation which remained, required, in the course of time, an addition to their first house, which nearly doubled its size. After a lapse of years, room was again wanting for a still growing people. The measure of providing a second house of worship, was then adopted, and accomplished, on the principle, that the church, branched out into two congregations, and worshipping in two houses, should enjoy, alternately and equally, the labours of two pastors. That second house, neat and commodious, was also filled: and soon again you found a pressing demand, which has existed and increased during some years past, for many seats beyond the number, which both your houses of worship could supply. To meet this demand, and to provide, at the same time, for a probable, and accelerated increase of numbers, for whom further additional room might be required, it was judged expedient, to take down, rather than to enlarge again, your ancient building, and in its place to erect the spacious edifice in which we are now assembled. This edifice, while it exhibits a new and noble style of architecture, and enriches our city with an additional pleasing monument of taste and liberality, affords within its capacious walls, the most convenient and desirable accommodation for a very large assembly of worshippers.

Who that is interested in the welfare of this branch of the Christian church, can view this elegant and valuable building, without feeling the lively emotions of a peculiar satisfaction and gratitude, while it is contemplated as the Ebenezer, which we have raised, testifying that "hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

Let us then here pause and recollect the first rise, the feeble origin, the remarkable prosperity, the rapid growth, the present numbers and strength of this church; the two commodious houses of worship, with which we are now provided; and all the advantages for attending the ordinances of the sanctuary, and supporting the institutions of the gospel, and transmitting its privileges and blessings to succeeding generations, which we enjoy under the smiles of a beneficent Providence; and let the language of our admiring, adoring hearts be, "What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake!" "For it is thou who performest all things for us."

Having thus obtained help of God, and being thus highly favoured of the Lord; and thus encouraged to hope, that "he will still send us help from the sanctuary, and strength out of Zion;" let us now, not reluctantly, but with a cheerful zeal, fulfil our engagements in defraying the whole cost of this very expensive, but most valuable building. Although the sum expended upon it, greatly exceeds our first expectations, yet, it will not, I am persuaded, exceed the funds of this church, united with those private resources of its members and supporters, which may, with convenience, be applied to this important object. Has there been any

departure from the principles of a rigid economy, in respect to the dimensions, the style, and cost of this edifice? But in regard to these circumstances, has the credit of religion, and the lasting benefit, as well as the present convenience of this church, been consulted? May we not then, reasonably hope, that what has been done in this case, with such worthy motives and views, will not be displeasing to our gracious Lord, who loves a cheerful giver, and delights in repaying what is freely given to him, with a becoming regard to his glory, and zeal for the promotion of his interests in the world? Did he not highly commend the affectionate piety of the woman, who poured upon himself the box of precious ointment, which might have been sold for much, and given to the poor? And by that example, are we not instructed, that them who honor him, by devising and doing liberal things, according to their abilities, for his sake and the gospel's, he will also honor with his approbation, and with the distinguishing blessings of his favour? Are you not also taught by his word, that the silver and the gold are his, which you employ in building an house for him, and in providing for his worship; in a word, that all in the heaven and in the earth is his; that riches and honor come of him; that he reigns over all; that in his hand is power and might; and that in his hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all? And do you not also know, that of all which you receive from him, you are only stewards, accountable to him as the Lord and owner of all, and under every obligation of duty and interest, to improve the talents, with which you are intrusted, to his glory? Wherefore attending with reverence to these intimations of his will, encourage yourselves in the Lord your God;

persuaded, that as it was in your heart to build such an house to his name; so now, if it be the sincere desire of your hearts, that you may see it filled with his glory, he will graciously accept and establish the work of your hands, and still be with you, and bless and prosper you, while you continue to love his church, and seek its good. And for your particular encouragement, with respect to this great undertaking, you may rest assured, that the worldly substance, with which, from the dispositions of a pious heart and willing mind, you thus honor the Lord, will be munificently recompensed to you, in the course of his good providence; perhaps, in part, with a visible and rich increase of the good things pertaining to this life; but more especially, in an abundant supply of the goodness of his house; of the blessings of his gospel, showered down upon your own souls, and descending to your children, and children's children, for a long time to come.

Not satisfied with the honor of consecrating a portion of your worldly interests, to the worthy design of building this house for the service of the Lord, would you now see it filled with his glory? This should doubtless be one of the favourite desires of all our hearts; and for this should we earnestly pray to Him, who will be inquired of by us, that he may do it for us; while he is as willing, as he is able, to do for us in this case, as in all other instances, exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think.

To him then, let our fervent, and continued petitions be offered up, not only in the congregation, but in the family, and the closet, that he may condescend to be present with us, on all the occasions of our solemnly assembling together in his house, and favour us with the

desirable displays of his saving power, and of his amiable glories, in his sanctuary. Let it be our heart's desire and prayer, that here the heavenly doctrines of the gospel may be preached, and its holy ordinances administered, in their genuine purity and simplicity; that here an uninterrupted succession of able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, clothed with the mantle, and actuated by the principles, which distinguished those faithful and zealous servants of the Lord, who have in former times laboured in this part of his vineyard, may here stand and minister in his sanctuary; and in this golden candlestick of the Lord, appear as burning and shining lights, and prove the honored and happy instruments of turning many sinners from darkness, to light; from the power of satan to God; and of building up believers on their most holy faith, and in their meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light; even the incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance, reserved for them in heaven. Let us pray without ceasing, that here, one generation after another, through the word of truth, and by the spirit of grace, may be born to God, and nourished and strengthened by the provisions of his house, and thus be prepared and trained up for the glory and felicity of Heaven. Thus continuing instant in prayer, and still praying in faith, we may then rejoice in the assured hope, that the Lord will hear and answer us in mercy; that he will condescend to come and dwell in this house, as the place of his rest, because he hath desired it; that his eyes will be open, and his ears attentive, to the prayers that are made in this place; and that here he will clothe his priests with salvation, and abundantly bless the provisions of his sanctuary: so

that the poor, the hungry, waiting soul, shall be satisfied with bread, and his saints be made to shout aloud for joy. But not confining our views to ourselves, let us embrace in our affectionate regards, the church of Christ, in all other places, and let it be our earnest, constant prayer, that all the nations of the earth may be brought into it, as the willing people of our Lord, in the day of his power. Then may we, with a joyful hope, proportioned to the strength of our faith, and the ardor of our desire, anticipate the approaching happy day, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it. And the Lord shall be unto his church an everlasting light, and her God her glory.

Would you, my friends, in answer to your prayers, see the glory of the Lord, and taste of his goodness in this house? Here then let your attendance upon the worship of God, be as regular and constant as your circumstances will permit. When you are under the restraint of afflictive providences; or when your situation will not admit of your waiting upon the Lord in his house, if you at the same time really desire his presence and favour, he will be as a sanctuary to you at home, or wherever you may be in the way of duty; and he will bless you there, and bless you even by the trials which prevent your improvement of the ordinances of his public worship. But when no insurmountable obstacle lies in your way, never allow your attendance on those services, in which you are called to appear before him in his house, to be prevented by the indulgence of a spirit of sloth, by an unhallowed attention to the affairs of this life; by the unseasonable entertain-

ments of the table ; by the intrusion of worldly company ; or by any dispositions or habits of a reluctant heart, or dissipated mind. If you thus wilfully "forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," you will most assuredly provoke the displeasure of your God, who is particularly and highly offended with those who "profane his sabbaths, and despise his holy things." Your conduct in this case, also, cannot fail to weaken the hands, and discourage the hearts, of those who are called to preach to you, that word of the Lord, by which you might be saved, but within the joyful sound of which you refuse to come.

Let it be remembered, that every example of this kind serves to sanction, and to increase, that neglect of the institutions of God's house, that profanation of the sacred day of the Lord, and that consequent corruption of morals, which are already awfully prevalent in the community, and will most certainly, sooner or later, draw down upon a guilty land, the righteous judgement of heaven. But if you religiously "decline doing your own pleasure, on the Lord's holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honorable ;" if you esteem it "good for you to draw near to God" in his ordinances, and conscientiously improve your opportunities for "appearing before him" in his sanctuary : then shall you know the "blessedness of the man, who keepeth the sabbath from polluting it," "and who loves the habitation of the Lord's house, where his saints rejoice in goodness."

When therefore the return of the season of public worship, and the voice, or the examples of others around you, call upon you and say, "Let us go into the house of the Lord ;" then let your hearts cheer-

fully reply, Lord, I come, "for my soul longeth for the courts of the Lord: and esteemeth one day enjoyed in these, better than a thousand spent elsewhere."

Parents and heads of families, shew your esteem and delight in the ordinances of the Lord's house, by resorting to them with exemplary constancy and devotion; and bring your children with you, when they are capable of a proper behaviour here; that they may become early habituated to respect the institutions of the sanctuary, and that they may be brought seasonably into the way of receiving the blessing of the Lord.

Children, be persuaded with willing minds, to accompany your parents and friends to the house of the Lord. For your encouragement in doing so, remember, that, in the temple which our Lord and Saviour, filled with his glory, when he came in our nature, he most kindly accepted the hosannas of little children; concerning whom he observed that "out of the mouths' of babes and sucklings the Lord ordaineth and perfecteth praise!" Remember, also, that the little children, who are brought to him in faith, and who willingly come to him, desirous of his blessing, he graciously receives into the arms of his mercy; and kindly cherishing them in the bosom of his love, as the tender and favoured lambs of his flock, he affectionately blesses them, declaring, that of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Let the youth of our congregations, who are particularly regarded as the rising hope of the church, be entreated to attend our solemn assemblies, with cheerfulness and constancy, watching attentively at wisdom's gates, that they may hear divine instruction, and by the doctrines of the gospel preached to them, they may become "wise unto salvation, through faith

which is in Christ Jesus." Would you, while rising to fullness of stature, or maturity of years, increase in wisdom and in favour with God and man? Would you be truly happy in yourselves, and aspire to the honor of doing the greatest possible good to others? "Remember then your Creator in the days of your youth," and seek without delay an interest in your Redeemer, who declares, that "they who seek him early, shall find him." Thus, will you become a seed whom the Lord condescends visibly to bless, and be prepared to shew forth his praise, and to maintain his cause in the world. "Your fathers, where are they? and the phophets," or ministers of God, "do they live forever?" Soon, my young friends, will your present pastors, like those who have preceded them, "finish the course of their mortal lives, and the ministry which they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." And will you not, before they go, allow them the high and peculiar satisfaction, of seeing you added to the church, among "such as shall be saved," and such as shall form some of the most precious jewels in their crown of rejoicing in the presence of their Lord, at his coming?

Soon the heads of your pious parents, if they yet live, and of other aged christian friends will be laid low under the clods of the valley; and their happy spirits, separated from the family of God on earth, and removed from the scenes of activity and usefulness, as well as of trial, in which they were placed here, shall ascend to join the holy and happy family in heaven, where "all their work is praise and love," and their recompense is the fullness of everlasting joy, in the presence of the Lord. How powerfully, how

persuasively, then, should this consideration call upon you to seek the grace of God, by which you may be prepared to fill up the places of our fathers, and become the honored instruments of upholding the church, and supporting the throne of your Redeemer in the world, and of perpetuating the institutions of the sanctuary, and the blessings of the gospel, to the generations, that are to follow you! Thus will you become bright ornaments of the religion of Christ, and prove rich blessings in your day, to his church on earth. Thus, after perhaps, a lengthened course of service and usefulness, you will become fitted for high stations of honor and joy in the presence of your Lord in heaven.

Let the servants,* also, statedly worshipping with us, be exhorted to consider, with grateful hearts, the desirable privileges with which they are favoured in having so large a portion of this spacious building, as well as of our other house of worship, appropriated to your accommodation, in attending upon the public worship of God, the common Father of mankind. With him, as we are assured by his word, there is no respect of persons, or preference given in shewing his mercy to the children of men, on account of their national origin, or their situation in life. With thankfulness and diligence then, improve the advantages thus allowed you for attending our religious assemblies, where you may be instructed in "the faith once delivered to the saints," and become acquainted with "the common salvation," purchased for all believers by the precious blood of Christ, and which is equally and most freely offered to all, who hear the joyful sound of his gospel; and where you may hope to see

* Alluding to the negro slaves, who attend this place of worship in large numbers. EDITOR.

the glory, and experience the grace, of that adorable Redeemer of the world, whose "gospel is preached to the poor," and whose spirit makes it effectual "to open the eyes of the blind, to accomplish the deliverance of the captives of satan, and to restore the wretched servants of sin, to the holy and happy liberty, which is to be found in the service of God, and with which the Son of God, the friend of sinners, makes his redeemed people free indeed. Considering then, your obligations, in these respects, carefully improve the privileges which you enjoy in our houses of worship, pray that you may understand the truth and grace of the gospel, when you attend the ministrations of it. Study to walk according to it, in the course of a sober, righteous and godly life; and particularly, by continuing, with good will, and all christian fidelity, to perform the services which his word directs you to do, to those whom his providence has placed in authority over you, not merely as done unto men, but to the Lord. Thus learning and obeying the truth, as it is in Christ, and thus labouring to adorn, in all things, the doctrine of God our Saviour; you may comfort your hearts with the assurance given you in his word, "that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive, whether he be bond or free."

Let us all, in a word, whether ministering in holy things, or attending in a private capacity, the business of the sanctuary in this house, let us all engage with united hearts in the holy services, to which we are here called, from one sabbath and season of religious worship, to another; and in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, let us walk humbly, cheerfully, constantly, and exemplarily, that our God and

Saviour, who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, may behold us with approbation, and that he may be in all things glorified by us.

Let us, in the fear and love of God, cultivate that spirit of brotherly love, of peace and harmony, which should ever distinguish a christian society, meeting in the same house of the Lord, waiting upon him in the same religious exercises, enjoying the same gospel privileges, and cherishing the pleasing, animating hope of sharing the same incorruptible, undefiled, unfading inheritance in the kingdom of glory. Such a temper and conduct will contribute most certainly and remarkably, to the strength, and the growth of this branch of the church—of this department of that holy family, of which Christ our Lord is the glorious head.

Thus, united as members of the household of faith; thus by love serving one another; and thus with one mind and one mouth glorifying God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and honoring the Son, even as we honor our Father, we may rest assured, that the God of love and peace will be with us, and by an abundant communication of the spirit of grace, will fill this house with glory.

Beholding this glory of the Lord in his sanctuary below, we shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord; and thus will our preparation and meetness be advanced for that bright and blessed world, where the redeemed are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell among them, and they, beholding his glory, shall be satisfied with his likeness, triumph in his high praises, and be filled with the joy of their Lord forever. AMEN.

AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT A WEEKLY MEETING,

OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY FOR RELIGIOUS WORSHIP AND IMPROVEMENT.

ON FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 22d, 1811.

It is with peculiar satisfaction, my worthy friends, that I have witnessed the recent establishment, and the promising progress, of this society; and that I now meet you here for the purpose of uniting with you in those interesting religious services, which form the leading objects for which it was instituted.

Cherishing the hope that you are already joined to the Lord in a perpetual covenant not to be forgotten; or feeling a solicitous concern that you may be found among the genuine disciples and followers of Christ; and at the same time conscious of your own weaknesses and necessities, and aware of the advantages to be derived from your associating frequently together for religious worship and improvement, you have wisely and well, resolved, to meet together statedly, at least on one evening in the course of every week, for these important purposes.

And in what way could an hour or two, at such times, be employed, that would be better adapted to promote the spirit of piety in your own souls, and to encourage each other's hearts, and strengthen each other's hands, in the great duties, and under the various trials, of the christian life?

Nor are your views of advantage limited merely to yourselves; as you cheerfully welcome your neighbours around you to join with you in your social worship, and your already considerable and gradually increasing collection of religious books are designed, not merely to be read for the common benefit in the meetings of your society, and for your individual improvement in your retired hours; but to be loaned also, under proper regulations, to your friends, who may be desirous of perusing them; while in your united prayers, it is your purpose and your practice, to remember and to plead for the church of Christ generally, and those branches of it especially with which you are more immediately connected; for the nation also, to which you belong, and in whose safety, peace, and prosperity, the most valuable privileges of men, civil and religious, and many of your dearest worldly comforts and enjoyments are deeply involved; in a word, for the temporal happiness and eternal salvation and felicity of your brethren of the great family of man, throughout the world.

Such are your worthy views, and such the important objects contemplated in the formation of this society; the design is certainly in itself laudable; and if, in pursuing it, you continue to be actuated by pure and upright principles and motives, and carry it on with a spirit of becoming union, harmony and zeal,

you need not doubt, but that the Lord your God and Saviour, whom you thus attempt to serve and honor, and who has promised his special presence "wherever two or three are met together in his name," for such purposes "will be with you," and will favour you with his acceptance and blessing, and crown you with the honor by which all his saints are distinguished. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name: and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."* The circumstances of your situation in the world, added to the necessities of your souls, having originally suggested the expediency of such a religious association, will, I trust, still recommend and urge your unremitted attendance on its meetings, and its exercises, as constituting at once the most profitable and the most agreeable employment to which the evening could be devoted.

You need not be informed,—you must be well aware and sensibly feel, how much you need all the aid, which you can by any means afford to each other in the all important concerns of religion. Surrounded with the multitude of the careless and the profane, who live without God in the world, and in the neglect and contempt of the gospel of Christ, and of the salvation of their own souls, and who pursue the perishing interests, and the destructive pleasures of the world, as the only objects of their warm regard; are you not liable to feel the unhappy influence of their conversation and con-

* Malachi iii. 16, 17.

duct, in abating the life and fervor of religion in your hearts, and assimilating you too much in your practice to the fashion and the course of this evil world?

To persevere stedfast and unmoved in the narrow way of holiness, which leads to life, in opposition to the vastly greater numbers, who are travelling in the broad way of sin, through scenes of present unrestrained indulgence, down to the regions of eternal death; while the corrupt propensities of your fallen, depraved nature, powerfully impel you "to follow a multitude to do evil," is like sailing against an unfavourable wind and tide combined. And it requires no small degree of watchfulness and resolution, of fervor in prayer, and activity in labour, in such circumstances, to hold fast your own integrity, to keep a conscience void of wilful offence, and to guard against the danger of declension and backsliding, and much more so, "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of your Saviour," and to advance from strength to strength in your christian course. "Who is sufficient for these things?" Of yourselves, you know, you are not. Under the conviction of this, it is then undoubtedly your wisdom, to avail yourselves of all the desirable help which you can obtain. And while you look chiefly by faith and prayer, to your God and Saviour, that he may "perfect his strength in your weakness, and make his grace sufficient for you," it behoves you, at the same time to study how you may become, in the most effectual manner, "helpers of each other's faith and joy," and spiritual improvement. For this purpose no means, subordinate to the ordinances of the sanctuary and the devotions of the closet, could have a more favourable tendency, or promise a better result, than those which you are pur-

suing, while thus meeting together regularly from time to time; that you may attend to some peculiarly instructive, searching, quickening or comforting, portions of scripture; or pious practical discourses of the most approved authors, which may be read among you; that you may perhaps occasionally engage in conversation on interesting religious subjects, conducive to mutual information and edification; and that you may "pour out your hearts" together before the Lord in prayer, for all the supplies of mercy and grace, which you need in the whole course and circumstances of your work and warfare; in *social prayer* naturally rendered more fervent, and therefore likely to be more effectual, by the consideration of your joining together in the same solemn act of worship, having in general the same sins, wants and sorrows, the same fears, doubts and desires to spread before God, and standing equally in need of the same blessings of his grace and salvation.

"As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend." And greatly is the soul often enlivened, and improved by joining in such religious exercises, as those which you have here in view, with christian friends and associates. David, no doubt knew the value of religious society, when he said, "I am a companion of all them that fear God and keep his commandments," and when he spoke of "his goodness as extending not to the Lord, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom was all his delight."

Have not you also, often experienced important benefits in a similar way? In your ordinary intercourse with your christian friends; if you have perceived

them to be engaged, with some becoming degree of zeal or liveliness in the service of their God, and in their attention to the things of their peace; and if, at the same time, you have been sensible of a more cold, remiss and languid frame of mind, have you not felt your resolutions awakened, to shake off the sloth which you have indulged, to resist the temptations by which you have been overcome; "to remember from whence you have fallen, to repent and do your first works," or to begin to seek in earnest the great salvation revealed and offered in the gospel, if this had been before neglected? And may you not promise yourselves the experience of similar advantages, and perhaps in a still higher degree, and larger measure, from your uniting, and taking part with each other in the appropriate duties and employments of such an association as this? How pleasing, how animating the thought, that in this way, you may be instrumental in contributing so much to each other's spiritual improvement in the present state of darkness and imperfection; and consequently, in the same proportion, to the advancement of your mutual, everlasting happiness, in a future world of heavenly light and glory.

And if the divine life may be thus promoted in your own souls, by the means on which you here attend, will not the same means have the desirable effect of "making your light shine with increasing lustre before others, and so giving it an increased efficacy, in constraining them, while they behold in your good conduct, more and more of the lovely fruits of your holy religion, "to glorify your Heavenly Father and Divine Redeemer?" Or will they not, be thus, at least, more effectually reproved and corrected for their

impenitence, their unbelief and their disobedience to the gospel, which you profess to adorn?

How cheering, also, how delightful is the hope, that the prayers in which you here unite, may be graciously answered by "Him who heareth prayer," in the blessings of his favour, showered down in rich abundance upon yourselves, and upon many others, whom you bear on your hearts, in your devout addresses at the throne of Grace?

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The united prayers of the faithful, we are encouraged and warranted by the best authority to expect, may be still more availing. For to such prayers, our Lord has certainly given some special and peculiar encouragement, when he says; "If even two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask," (in his name, and agreeably to the word and will of God,) "it shall be done for them of my Father, who is in heaven." Now it is the declared will of God, that in the religious assemblies of his people "their supplications, prayers and intercessions, with giving of thanks, should be made, not only for themselves, but for all men." You have then abundant reason for being strong in faith, and cherishing a good hope, and the most enlarged expectations, while you continue to unite your hearts with your voices in praying, not only for the salvation and the prosperity of your own souls, and for the edification and peace of the church of Christ and its individual members; but for the wider spread and growing success of the gospel in the world, that it may have a free course and be glorified, in the salvation of multitudes in every nation; and that the kingdom of our

Redeemer, which is the kingdom of grace and righteousness, may be established and grow, and flourish, on the ruins of the usurped dominion of satan, wherever the children of men dwell on "all the face of the earth." And surely you cannot have less cause for believing and hoping, that you may be graciously heard and answered, when it is "your heart's desire, and your prayer to God," for your brethren around you, who enjoy with yourselves the external privileges of the gospel dispensation, without having yet experienced its saving operations, that while they are permitted to "see the heavenly light," and to "hear the joyful sound of the gospel," they may be made to feel its divine energy, in "turning them from darkness to light, from the power of satan to God, and from their sins unto righteousness, so that they may obtain the forgiveness of their sins, and the salvation of their souls, and an everlasting inheritance of life and glory, among all them that are sanctified, through the faith that is in Jesus Christ."

Since then you are thus authorized to hope, that you may receive the most important benefits to yourselves, and at the same time prove instrumental in securing the most precious blessings of the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus, to an unknown number of your fellow-men; let your hearts be encouraged and animated by these considerations and prospects; and let it be your particular study and care, that you may continue to be of one mind, and of one accord, and that with a truly christian spirit of charity, zeal, and constancy, you may persevere in improving the means to which you have thus resorted, and which you are now pursuing for the attainment of those most interesting

and desirable objects, to which your views were directed in the establishment of this society.

For these purposes, may the God of love, of peace, and of all grace, be with you : and may you find him ever present and ever ready, " to do for you, exceeding abundantly, above all that you can ask or think ;" through the riches of his grace in Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Mediator ; " who is," with the Father and the Holy Spirit, " over all, God blessed for ever. Amen !"

LETTERS.

TO MISS N. R.

ALEXANDRIA, JUNE 25, 1784.

MY DEAR N.

FROM the intimate acquaintance which has for a considerable time subsisted between us, I am induced to believe, that you will take in good part, the freedom of a familiar letter. It is dictated by sentiments of sincere and tender regard for you, designed, while it gratifies my own feelings, to afford you, if not an improving entertainment, at least an innocent amusement in some of your unemployed moments.

The esteem which I have entertained for your very worthy parents, ever since my first knowledge of them, would naturally lead me to indulge some partiality for those also, who must be particularly dear to them, in the relation of children. Even upon this principle, I have always derived much pleasure, from that unreserved intercourse with you all, from the eldest to the youngest, which I have enjoyed during the short stay that I am allowed to make in the family, once in the year since your removal from Alexandria. But this pleasure, I can with sincerity assure you, is greatly increased by those promising appearances in your character, which incline me to hope, that, as you severally advance forward on the stage of life, you will individually merit the respect that is always paid to virtue, and

conciliate the love and favour, which are always shewn to persons of agreeable dispositions, and amiable conduct. While I freely express this sentiment, which I think to be true in itself, and not improper to be communicated to you, I have no inclination to deal in the language of flattery. My only aim is to encourage those principles, and to cherish those opening buds, which may hereafter, with due culture, be productive of the happiest consequences, and crowned with the most desirable fruit.

I need not remark to you, my dear, that you are now arrived at an age, when the little pursuits and amusements, which properly enough engage the attention and constitute the happiness of children, would be to you as unbecoming, as they are unseasonable. I have no room to doubt, but that you have commenced the young woman, with sentiments suited to support and adorn that more important character, in which you now appear. I am sure that the motives which serve to enforce the cultivation of such sentiments, and of a correspondent practice, are too obvious not to be discerned; too forcible not to be felt, by you. They are drawn from the consideration of your own credit and interest, which upon the score of a justifiable and laudable self-love, cannot but be very dear to you; and from a principle of gratitude to those, whose study it has been to furnish your mind with every valuable accomplishment, of which it was susceptible in the earlier days of your youth. To the soft, but powerful, influence of this most amiable principle of your nature, your tender bosom cannot be insensible. And how pleasing, how delightful must be the sensations which will arise in your own heart from the reflection, that while you are pursuing your own truest honor and happiness, in

those paths of piety and virtue, which the affectionate care of your parents has so early marked out, and so earnestly recommended to your choice ; you are at the same time making them the best, the most satisfactory return, which they could possibly wish to receive. To such a kind requital, they have surely the best founded claim : and as I am well convinced, that you are not wanting in a disposition to pay it, so it is with the sincerest pleasure, I find, that your endeavours in that way have not been ineffectual. Your dear mother expresses, in terms not a little flattering, her approbation of your conduct ; and also of that of your little sisters, since the weighty charge of the family has fallen, in so great a degree, upon herself. Her instructions and example, I doubt not, have had an happy influence. Let them be duly attended to for the time to come. You cannot fail to profit greatly by them. And think how happy it will make your honored father, should he be restored to you, to participate in the praises, which he shall find his children have been, and I trust will still continue to be, ambitious to deserve.

But whether he is reserved for the enjoyment of so great a satisfaction, is yet to us a distressing uncertainty. What the determination of Providence respecting him may have been, time will at length discover ; and possibly the discovery may be such, as will gratify the warmest wishes of all who are now anxiously concerned for his safety. In the mean time, this we have the best ground to believe, that it is well with him. There is no situation into which he may be cast, but what I trust will be sanctified to his benefit. And if his connexion with this life has ceased ; if the happy days which he has heretofore spent with the amiable partner

of his bosom, with the children of his love, are not to be renewed; if the joys which he might have yet promised himself, from this purest and richest source of earthly felicity, are not to be realized; let us comfort ourselves with the hope, with the assured persuasion, that he has a far happier lot in the glorious family of heaven, where the pleasures of friendship are undissembled and complete; where the blessings of society are exalted to their highest perfection, and permanent as eternity. In whatever manner this very interesting matter may be ordered, it certainly becomes us, with unrepining resignation, to acquiesce in the event, and to adore the hand by which it has been directed; not doubting but that what God has done, is intended to accomplish some design of infinite wisdom, goodness, and love to him, and to all intimately and tenderly connected with him.

I know, my dear N. that to be deprived, should it be your lot, so early in life, of so valuable a parent, is an affliction in itself, very severe, and which you must deeply feel. Yet, let it be considered, that even this, as well as every other painful stroke which you have already felt, or which may yet await you, may be overruled, so as to work for good, and will infallibly do so, if wisely improved. It is good, as the Prophet expresses it, to bear the yoke in one's youth. Our condition must be privileged beyond the common lot of the most virtuous and the most happy on earth, if we do not often, during our progress through life, experience the bitterness of disappointment in some of our favourite hopes, and suffer the painful loss of some of our most valued enjoyments. It may therefore be highly expedient and salutary, to set out in life, under a disci-

pline, adapted to form the mind to habits of reflection and resignation, by which it will be best prepared to meet, and to sustain, the trials of succeeding years. Trials, of one kind or other, must be expected by all the children of Adam, who are born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward. They usually become more frequent and painful, as we proceed further in our pilgrimage through life; and they are, if not absolutely necessary, at least highly conducive to the safety and prosperity of our souls. Wise and happy are they, who have been early taught to view them in this light, and to bear them, when they come, with suitable humility and patience.

Whatever may be the portion of affliction allotted to you, I hope you will never allow yourself to sink in despondence under it: but that you will study to add to that softness and sensibility of heart, by which I wish to see you ever distinguished, that spirit of christian faith and fortitude, which overcometh the world. This is to be sought by earnest prayer, and to be cherished by a life of sincere piety, and uniform holiness. And they who conscientiously aim to approve themselves to God in these duties, trusting in the merits and grace of the Redeemer, for their acceptance and reward, may, even in the darkest day and most trying hour of life, rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation. For the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, to those who thus keep his covenant, and to those who thus *remember his commandments* to do them. As a Father pitieth his children, so will the Lord pity those who thus fear and serve him. Such he will never leave nor forsake. From such he will never take away his loving kindness.

in his protection they shall be safe: in the light of his countenance they shall be happy. They who have no claim to these privileges of the true christian, will be left poor and wretched in the midst of the greatest prosperity of this world; but they who have been wise to secure their interests in these, may solace themselves with pleasures and with hopes, which its most flattering smiles cannot inspire, and which its severest affiictions cannot take away.

I shall not apologize for the serious strain in which I write. It is that which is most familiar to my pen, which I believe will best correspond to the feelings of your heart. The sentiments of religion which I have taken occasion to suggest, cannot be unpleasing to you. Religion I am persuaded, you wish to make the primary object of your attention. In the practice of it, I am sure, you will find your truest and highest happiness. Though its aspect be grave, yet is it not severe. Though its laws inculcate sobriety of mind, and of manners, yet do they not forbid, but rather encourage, cheerfulness of temper. It never was intended to make our pleasures less; but on the contrary, to improve, exalt, and multiply them. And accordingly, its ways will be pronounced by them who travel in them, to be ways of pleasantness, and they will find all its paths peace. Religion is indisputably the highest wisdom, the brightest ornament, the richest treasure, of human nature. The dear young friend to whom I write, will, I trust, ever reckon it among the most attractive charms of her youth. She will certainly find the best support of her age (should life extend so far) of her sweetest solace in every season of affliction and sorrow on earth. But what language can speak the advantage of it, in a

dying hour? And a dying hour is what we should never allow to be long out of view. For even in the season of youth, and gaity, of joy and hope, it may not be far remote. But when it arrives, then to be able to look back upon a life well spent, carefully redeemed from the vanities of the unthinking, and the follies of the vicious, and devoted to the service of our God and Saviour; to the practice of all righteousness and goodness; and to look forward, with that lively animating hope, which is founded on an approving conscience, of rising beyond the grave, to those joys which are unspeakable and full of glory, which shall be the portion of the good through eternal ages; this surely is an happiness, for the attainment of which, no exertions can be too great; for the want of which, nothing that this earth may afford can ever compensate. This is the happiness which, with all the ardent affection of a friend and christian, I wish you to possess. And as it is to be secured by religion, and by that alone, no other consideration will be necessary to engage you to pursue it, in this way, with all the care and diligence, which so important an object justly challenges. Only study to be *good*, and you cannot fail to be *blest*.

According to my usual practice, when I write to those whom I love, I have run my letter considerably beyond the limits, which I had at first prescribed to myself. But I hope you will not think it tedious. It has all flowed from an heart, that feels itself tenderly interested in your happiness, and sincerely desirous of contributing every thing in my power to promote it. With this object in view, I felt too much pleasure in writing, to admit of my laying down my pen, so soon as I intended, when I took it up.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MR.——

BATH, (VIRGINIA) AUGUST 3, 1785.

My dear friend would certainly blame me, and very justly too, if in my present situation, with my time so much at my own disposal, I should omit a favourable opportunity of discharging one of the kindest offices, that can be shewn to an absent friend. I am apprehensive, indeed, that you will find it performed in a manner little suited to gratify your feelings and expectations; but I am desirous to offer you something in this way, that may serve as a testimony at least of my good will, persuaded that your usual candor, or rather partiality, will dispose you to read whatever I write, with all the indulgence I could reasonably ask, if not with all the pleasure I would wish to afford. And if my writing may only answer the purpose of furnishing you with an innocent and agreeable amusement for a few moments, I shall think the time bestowed upon this, among the best employed, and happiest hours, of the sweet leisure I now enjoy.

After an easy and agreeable journey, my fellow traveller and myself arrived here, through the favour of a kind Providence, on the fifth day after leaving Alexandria. The ride itself contributed to the restoration of my strength and spirits, even beyond my expectations, more especially when we approached towards the mountainous country, where every breeze seemed to breathe health and cheerfulness; and my residence here, as far as I can judge from the experience I have yet had of it, seems likely to prove no less favourable to the object of my visit. Independently of the water for which this place is chiefly famed, it seems to have

been particularly designed by the beneficent Creator, to furnish a salutary and pleasing retreat for the infirm and the languid, during the sultry heat of summer. It lies in a deep narrow vale, formed on the north by a lofty, steep and craggy mountain, and by a considerable hill on the south. The first of these, besides exhibiting to the contemplative mind, a pleasing prospect of nature in her rude, untouched magnificence, and I think not susceptible of improvement by the hand of art, serves the valuable purpose of intercepting the morning and evening rays of the sun, and by these means of protracting, considerably, the coolness of those sweet and refreshing hours, which form the beginning and the close of the summer day. The town is not yet an object of much consideration; though it is scattered over a pretty large extent of ground. The greater part of the houses, which I conjecture amount in the whole, to between one hundred and fifty, and two hundred, are small and indifferent, suited merely to the design of a temporary residence; though there are a few of a neat and convenient structure already built, and others continually rising. The water, which is to be considered as the capital object of the place, is indeed the purest, and the lightest, I have ever tasted. Besides these excellent qualities, it is generally allowed to possess some peculiar medicinal virtues, which render it highly salutary in many complaints.

Whether it will eventually have a good effect in my own case, I cannot yet determine. What I have drank of it has been so far useful, as to promote a good appetite and digestion. I have not yet made sufficient trial of the bath, to form a judgement whether it will agree equally well with my constitution. But to whatever it

is to be ascribed, whether to the use of the water, or to the change of air, or to any other cause, I have certainly felt myself much better hitherto, than when I left home; though I still find that I am not perfectly freed from all remains of my former fever. I am not without hope, however, that after spending two or three weeks more here, I shall return to Alexandria with a greater stock of health, than I have possessed for a twelve month past.

The company collected here is not yet very numerous, but appears to be daily increasing. The methods of spending the time are as various, as the circumstances, characters, and dispositions of the people. We have balls and plays, and gaming houses, and during the last week, sermons almost every day by the methodists. And upon one or other, upon fewer or more of these, the gay, the dissipated, the serious, attend, as vanity, passion, or conscience happen, to have a determining influence. For my own part, as I never yet found happiness in a crowd, or in the usual occupations, either of the busy or the idle, I have chosen to pass my time chiefly in retirement. And I felicitate myself that I have it in my power to do so, as I am provided with a private room, just large enough to contain a bed and a chair, with the liberty of a comfortable parlour, not yet appropriated, and a charming cool piazza, fronting the high mountain mentioned above, and approaching within a few yards of the fine stream of water, flowing from the springs of health, near to which the house is situated, and yet remote from noise.

Sweet solitude! But ah! one thing is still wanting to complete the scene, and give the full relish of it.

What that is, your own feelings, will readily suggest, when you reflect how defective are all the advantages of situation, and all the other enjoyments of life, without the society of those, whose souls are united with ours, in the tenderest intercourse of friendship and affection, and whose happiness is dear to us as our own. Were I only favoured with the presence of the much valued friends whose company I resigned on the road, I should think myself as happy, during my transient residence here, as the state of things in this evil world, will ordinarily admit. But while I cannot but regret, that the pleasure and improvement of our personal intercourse and conversation, are for a time suspended, it is some consolation to me, that I can fancy myself still present with you in spirit, and sometimes associated with you in our approaches to the throne of grace, addressing our Heavenly Father, in the name of our dear Saviour, for every blessing to each other, as well as to ourselves.

Often, often, my dear friend, do I think of you at all hours of the day, and more especially, when wandering solitary, as fancy leads, in the shady, and delightfully romantic walks, with which the environs of this place abound; and recollecting with the tenderest sympathy, the afflictions and the sorrow under which you have been so long depressed, my fervent prayers are offered up to the Father of mercies, that as a father pitieth his children, so he may pity you, and help you to bear your bodily infirmities, and the troubles of your mind, with christian fortitude and patience, till he shall see fit to restore you to the full possession of your health, and give you the uninterrupted enjoyment of that peace of mind, which passeth all understanding.

To the first of these, I hope your retreat in the country will greatly contribute: And the last of them I know you have sometimes experienced already, in a degree which I should covet to attain, in preference to all besides, which can be enjoyed on earth; for to feel this composure, this elevation of soul, is to anticipate the rest, and the blessedness of heaven itself.

O my friend, when I have heard you talk, though with all that jealous distrust of yourself, which true humility ever inspires, of the love of God shed abroad upon your heart, of the aspirations of your soul after the fullest conformity, and the nearest approach to the adorable Author of your being and redemption; and of the hope which you could not but sometimes entertain, of rising to fullness of joy in his glorious presence, I could not but wonder, that you should at all, and much more so generally, indulge a spirit of dejection and mourning. At such season, I could not forbear rejoicing on your account, though on my own I could feel nothing but sensations of shame and self-reproach, under the conviction of my guilty deficiencies in these exercises and attainments. And amid the painful reflections usually excited by every serious and impartial investigation of my own heart, and my conduct, I still feel the most cordial satisfaction in the thought, that I am warranted to apply to you all the comfort, which that expression and affectionate exhortation of St. Paul is intended to convey to the true christian; "Rejoice in the Lord, always, and again I say rejoice." Though the power of sin may not yet be entirely subdued within you, and you may find abundant cause to renew the tears of your repentance every day; yet let your heart remain open at the same time to the sensa-

tions of holy joy, remembering that the God with whom you have to do, is merciful and gracious, forgiving the iniquity, transgression and sin of every true penitent; and that you have also an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, who can be touched with the feeling of your infirmities, and ever lives to make intercession for you; and will secure a divine acceptance for all your good desires and faithful services, however feeble and imperfect. Should the troubles of the present life, seem to bear hard and long upon the flesh, ever tender of itself, and averse from suffering of every kind, count it, nevertheless, all joy when you are called to endure trials of this nature, esteeming them, not according to the suggestions of sense, but according to the representations given of them in the gospel, which teaches you to view them as the discipline of a Father's hand, and as comparatively light and but for a moment, while they are working for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Or should the fear of death, and more especially, of the pain of dissolution, begin to spread a gloom over your spirits, banish at once every melancholy idea on this subject, and lift up your head and your heart with joy, in the persuasion, that your redemption is then drawing nigh; and that when your earthly house of this tabernacle shall dissolve, you have then a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; where mortality, with all its attendant evils, shall be swallowed up in everlasting life and happiness. Have you not through the abounding riches of divine grace, and by the great and precious promises of the gospel, a claim to all these consolations, in time, and to all these hopes for eternity? Let not then these divine consolations be small with

you; let not these animating hopes be rejected. For these, and these alone, can effectually sooth your soul into sweet serenity, when disquieted within you, and raise it in holy triumph, when bowed down under the various sorrows of this world of affliction and trial.

I know to whom I write, or I might perhaps think it necessary to add some admonitory hints of a different tendency, to counsel you to temper your joys and your hopes, with moderation and fear. But I am well aware, that you require little cautionary advice of this kind, as you are already but too much disposed to write bitter things against yourself, and to cherish distressing doubts and apprehensions, when you have the best ground to say, "I know in whom I have believed;" and in whom, believing, you should rejoice, with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. On this account I esteem it my duty, as much as it is my inclination, to use my best endeavours to be an helper of your joy. And though I should be able to do nothing more toward the accomplishment of so friendly a design, than merely to express the desire of my heart, and shew my good will; perhaps even this, as it affords some little satisfaction to my own mind, may have some favourable influence also upon yours. I shall not however be at all disappointed, if I should appear to you, like the friends of Job, in the days of his distress, a miserable comforter, as unsuccessful, as I am unskilled, in the business I am so forward to attempt. Conscious of my own defective talents for executing properly, this tenderest office of friendship, I commend you to the affection and experience of one much better qualified for it, and at the same time, possessed of the peculiar advantages and opportunities, arising from that most intimate and dear relation

in which he is connected with you; and my prayers shall not cease to be offered up for you, to Him who alone is able effectually to establish, strengthen, and comfort you.

This I suppose will find you still in the country, as that is undoubtedly the situation most favourable to the recovery of your health. All I fear is, that you will feel yourself rather too solitary there, unless you are on a footing of agreeable intimacy with the good family in which you reside. I persuade myself that you will find them social and friendly, and disposed to contribute every thing in their power, to your comfort and happiness. If so, they have my blessing, if that will avail any thing, for my heart blesses every body that shews you any kindness. Have you the society of either of your dear little children? Your maternal feelings, the tenderest and most exquisite of which the human heart is susceptible, will not readily consent to forego the entertaining prattle and play of the one, and the still more sweetly engaging smiles, of the other. But if circumstances require you to deny yourself for a short season, in these most innocent and delightful of all social pleasures, comfort yourself, in the mean time, that you are using the means for prolonging them; and that a temporary suspension of enjoyment, gives it a higher value and relish when restored. I feel the force of this consideration myself, at the present moment. What I now most want, is the society I most value. But the prospect of enjoying it ere long, with increased pleasure, reconciles me to the most disagreeable circumstance of my present situation, or at least helps me to bear it without repining. I cannot yet name the time of my return; but whether absent or present, be assured that

your interests lie very near my heart; and that you, and all who are dear to you, will be happy both now and forever, if kind Heaven favours the warmest wishes of your very sincere and affectionate friend.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO REV. DR. S.

[THE FIRST LETTER WRITTEN AFTER HIS SETTLEMENT IN CHARLESTON.]

CHARLESTON, APRIL 18, 1789.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

By the return of the same conveyance which brought me your very acceptable favour of the 10th of Dec. last, I wrote to one of your family, and desired my cordial thanks for it, to be presented to you. Particular circumstances prevented me from gratifying my wishes, in writing to yourself at that time. I rely on your well known benevolence, and long experienced friendship, to excuse the omission, and with pleasure, improve the present opportunity for returning you in this way, my best acknowledgements for your much valued letter, and for all the instances and expressions of your kind and friendly regards, with which you have honored me.

The generous interest which your worthy family, together with yourself, take in my concerns, and the pleasure which you feel in what contributes to my happiness, afford me a very peculiar satisfaction. For such testimonies of the affectionate remembrance of me, by persons whose favourable opinion and good will, is so highly flattering and pleasing to me, what adequate returns can I make? They will be recollected with the

liveliest gratitude; and as my heart has long cherished the sentiments and feelings of a sincere esteem, and cordial friendship for you, and can never forget the many improving and happy hours, which I have enjoyed among you; so it will, I think, never cease to feel itself very tenderly interested in your welfare, and fervently to pray, that the bountiful Author of all good, may suitably and abundantly reward all your kindness shewn to me, and make you all happy in every blessing of his providence and grace.

Your excellent hints of advice, are worthy of your character, your age and experience; and I hope they will be remembered by me for the government of my conduct, with the respect and reverence due to the counsels of piety and wisdom; and with the regards due to the dictates of an affection truly paternal.

I feel the weight of the charge which I have undertaken here; and under a consciousness of my unworthiness of the trust committed to me, and unfitness for the work in which I am employed, I find sufficient cause for humiliation, and many apprehensions. But I desire to have my dependence still placed, and fixed, on that grace, which I know is sufficient for me, and on that strength, which can be made perfect in the greatest human weakness. It is to me a very comfortable circumstance of my situation here, that the benevolent and friendly disposition of the people, whom I am called to serve in the gospel, inclines them, to receive such services as I am able to render them, with all the candor and indulgence, which I could reasonably wish or expect. May that candor and indulgence, and all their kind, and respectful attentions to their ministers, be graciously recompensed, and made mutually blessed, in the abundant success

of our labours; and through grace, I cannot but encourage the hope, that we shall not labour altogether in vain. Serious impressions of religion appear to be sometimes made, under the ministrations of the word, upon many of our hearers, and particularly upon the poor sons of Africa and slavery. Several individuals, both white and black, have been lately added to the communion of our church.

An increasing acquaintance with the congregation, contributes to make me more and more sensible of the obligations which I am under to you and Dr. Duffield, for your friendly agency in introducing me to the connexion in which I am now united with a people, from whose religious character, friendly dispositions, and polished manners, the pastoral relation naturally becomes as pleasing and delightful, as it is in itself important and interesting. It remains for me only to wish that I may never dishonor the partiality of the worthy friends to whom I am so much indebted. My worthy colleague, your friends, I believe, in general here, together with myself, are in usual health. Present my best regards and wishes to Mr. S. and all the family. With great esteem and affection, I am your, and their obliged friend.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO REV. DR. G.

CHARLESTON, APRIL 20, 1790.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Has not the poet elegantly and emphatically expressed it? "Procrastination is the thief of time." And the truth of the expression, whose experience has not in a thousand instances confirmed?

As for myself, I feel it every week, in the loss of almost days ; and every day, in the loss of hours, stolen from me by the habit of deferring something, that claims an immediate attention, and might be done at the present time, to a more convenient season. Many of these things will, of course, be left undone ; and many of them, which cannot be finally and totally neglected, will be done in a manner in which they ought not to be done. The review of such delays, and of their consequences, has seldom failed to awaken regret. I wish I were not obliged to add, and has almost as seldom served to promote amendment.

These reflections have been renewed in my mind, and naturally led my pen to begin this letter in the manner which you see, by the circumstance of reading over again, what I had several times read before, your valued letter of the 26th of February, ult.

* * * * * * * * * *

I sincerely thank you for your letter, and all that it contains. The expressions of your friendly regards for me, are very pleasing, as I cannot but think it particularly desirable to possess the esteem of those who themselves deserve it. And the assurance which it gives of your disposition, to maintain the correspondence begun, is not less acceptable to me ; as it promises me much pleasure and improvement.

You have also my best acknowledgements for the copy of your sermon, which accompanied your letter. The occasion on which it was delivered, was truly solemn, and to every reflecting and well disposed mind, deeply interesting and affecting.

Dr. Duffield's death will be felt much more extensively, than by his own congregation ; and especially in your church judicatories, of which he was a well in-

formed, industrious, zealous, and useful member. It is regretted by many of our church here, by whom he was personally known, and highly esteemed. The abridgement of his character, as it appeared in your papers, was transferred into ours ; and by some good judges of the truth, as well as of the style, I have heard it pronounced justly and elegantly drawn.

With respect to the measure which you recommend, that some communications relative to our professional character and business, should have a place in our letters, my sentiments entirely coincide with your own. Communications of this kind, made in this way, are certainly peculiarly adapted to be useful, to the parties concerned in the correspondence. And if in this case, I should be the only gainer, as I certainly shall be chiefly so, in regard to instruction and improvement received, I hope that notwithstanding, you will not hesitate freely to impart ; as the advantage in another point of view, will be no less in your favour ; since according to the maxim of the Divine Author of our religion, "It is more blessed to give, than to receive."

The sample which you have already given of the measure which you have recommended, is on a very important point. All that you have said upon it is, I think, perfectly just ; and is far from appearing in my view too much. If you have any more observations, as you seem to intimate that you have, to offer upon it, I shall receive them with pleasure, and I trust not without some profit.

Of the two different methods of preaching, the abstracted and the theoretical ; the plain and practical ; I think with you, that on every account, and with respect to all descriptions of hearers, the preference is unquestionably to be given to the latter. For the reasons

which you have suggested in the case of all preachers; and I in my own case for another reason, which if not so good an one, must at least be allowed to be a weighty one with me; I mean, because I am conscious that if I possess any talent for preaching, it is not that of treating a subject *en thesi*. But if I thought I could do much more and better, than I know I am able to do in that way, I certainly would not with my present sentiments of its utility, attempt it much more than I have done. The *Utile*, indeed, ought never, I believe, to be connected with the idea of such preaching; and as to the *Dulci*, I think it can make no pretensions to it. To me it conveys the idea of a laborious waste of study, and time to the preacher; and of the still more deplorable loss of a most precious and inestimable season to the hearers. Under this impression, I aim only at the plain and practical method in my sermons; but with what propriety or success, must be left with those who hear them, to judge.

What is the usual length of your discourses? Mine very seldom extend to three quarters of an hour, and most commonly fall short of forty minutes. I never heard that they were too short; but have sometimes had hints, that they would not have been less acceptable, if they had been shorter. But the length of a sermon I know, is not always measured by time; so that the time which would appear long for one of mine, might appear very short for that of another person. Newton, whose character for good sense, and accurate observation, is not inferior to that, by which he is distinguished for his piety, in one of his letters, under the title of *Cardiphonia*, unites his own, with the prevailing voice, against long sermons; but allows an hour to

be a tolerable length in ordinary cases. To a brother clergyman, who sometimes held out to two hours, he observes, that when weariness begins, edification ends; and that, therefore, "it is better to feed the people like chickens, a little at a time and often; than to cram them like turkeys, till they cannot hold one gobbet more."

He is also, I find, a friend to extempore preaching, as a mode more favourable to familiar language, and to gain the attention of the people, than writing and reading. *Memoriter* preaching will, I presume, answer the latter purpose, as well as the extempore kind; and in almost all other respects, seems to have greatly the advantage of it. But whatever may be the recommendation of extempore preaching, I cannot think of practising it; and among other reasons against it, because to me it appears to be impracticable, partly perhaps for want of courage, and partly, and chiefly, for want of a sufficient fund of ideas, and a ready command of language, to express those that might present themselves. I have indeed often heard it attempted by those who were not over-rich in either; but the success did not speak much in favour of the attempt. Do you ever make any extemporaneous excursions beyond the lines which your pen had previously marked out? In the few essays that I have ever made in this way, I have always fared just as I have done in all my endeavours to learn to swim; I have immediately sunk, and eagerly hastened back to the ground which I had left.

If I should add much more to this letter, I fear you will be led, from the citation from Cardiphonia in the last page, to conclude, that I consider, and mean to treat you, like one of Newton's turkeys. Yet, if other

letters, and other engagements, did not demand a share of my present attention, I should still write on, perhaps to the bottom of the next page. And even as things are, this will probably be the case.

* * * * * * * * *

The redemption of time is one of the most valuable Christian arts, but one in which I feel myself extremely unskilled. And surely there is no deficiency more to be regretted, or that can be more detrimental, as its injurious consequences reach, not only through all the stages of the present life, but through all the periods of a future immortality.

Can you tell me how to guard more effectually against the danger of being robbed, as I am every day, of some everlasting treasure, which might be laid up by some good done, that is omitted? But I am sensible that it is not information that I most need on this subject. For in this, as in innumerable other instances,

> "I see the right, and I approve it too;
> Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

And so it will be, till I am more careful to avail myself of that grace, which is sufficient for me, and of that strength which can be made perfect in my weakness. You find no doubt, as well as myself, that among a numerous people much time must be devoted, or if you like the expression better, *sacrificed*, to visits: for many of them will be of such a nature, as to be recollected only for the awakening of the mortifying and painful reflection, how much better might the time have been employed! Yet if we possessed, as we ought to do, the prudence of the serpent, united with the innocence of the dove, and the courage becoming the soldiers

of Jesus Christ, we might improve even the visits which *must* be made, as well as those which we would *choose* to make, to the purposes of acquiring knowledge ourselves, more useful than any which books can supply, and of suggesting and *recommending* to others, more profitable instruction, than any which we can communicate in our public discourses. It is well worth while to study how we may properly preach from house to house; for it may be made the most practical, and has often proved the most persuasive, kind of preaching.

Our worthy friend Mr. B. was lately chosen a member of the Convention, for new modelling the constitution of this state; to meet the beginning of next month.

With affectionate regards to Mrs. G. I am, with great sincerity and respect, yours,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. K.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 27, 1791.

MY DEAR WIFE,

THIS is intended to go in the schooner Friendship, Capt. W. Before it can reach Philadelphia, I hope you will be safely landed there, and rejoicing with our friends in the goodness and mercy of the Lord, to whom you have cried for counsel, protection, help, and all needful grace; and who performeth all things for you and me, and all who have ever sought him as their God, and have thought it good for them, that they should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

When you left Charleston, I think you were enabled to possess a composure of mind, which was far beyond

any thing that could be attained by the best efforts of your feeble timid nature. In my view, it was such as could result only from that faith, which is the gift of God; and which is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for. With you, I felt disposed to believe, that as you had committed your way to the Lord, trusting also in him, that he would bring it to pass; so he would accordingly be with you in the way in which you were going, and conduct you to your father's house in peace;* and thus remember to you the word upon which he had caused you to hope, and give you the desire of your heart in a comfortable meeting with the dear family, and other valued friends, from whom you had been so long separated, and whom you were so solicitous to see.

It will be very pleasing to me to hear, that our expectations have not been disappointed; and that you have again found, that the already tried promises, are the sure promises of everlasting truth, and all yea, and amen in Christ. And surely, by the first opportunity you will inform me of your arrival, and of many particulars of your voyage, and your reception in Philadelphia; so that in the renewed mercies, which you have experienced, I may rejoice with you, and that, distant as we now are from each other, I may, notwithstanding, magnify the Lord *with you*, and *together* with you exalt his name. In this most reasonable and delightful service, I hope in due season, to join *with* you in a more literal sense, and a more comfortable manner, than our present circumstances will permit.

While our thanksgivings are offered up together for mercies already experienced, let us not forget or ne-

* Gen. xxviii. 20.

glect to be found helping together, by prayer for each other, that we may be favoured with that Divine protection and guidance, support and comfort, and various grace which we still need during our separation ; and which indeed will be always equally necessary to us, through the journey of life, whether we are travelling in it alone, or in company.

A fellow traveller in this journey, whose sentiments, views, affections, and every interest, so unite and accord with one's own, as to become in reality the same, is truly a most desirable blessing ; and a blessing which has certainly laid me under many obligations, most thankfully to acknowledge the wise and tender care and mercy of the Lord, who has provided such an *helpmeet* for me. Of the advantages and comforts of such a connexion, the nearest and the tenderest in life, neither of us, have, I believe, been insensible. Yet as we often best learn the value of our enjoyments, when we are deprived of them, perhaps the temporary suspension of some of ours in the present instance, may serve to promote among other good purposes, a temper of thoughtfulness to the blessed Author of every good and perfect gift, who bestows, withdraws, and restores the comforts of life at his pleasure ; and to excite us to improve them, when they are again returned, more to his praise.

Ever since you crossed the bar, the wind has been as favourable for your voyage, as your heart or mine could wish. If it has been so with you, the goodness and mercy of the Lord have surely followed you on the wings of the wind. And if it has been so ordered, may not this circumstance be justly regarded as an answer to prayer, and a part of the reward of a patient

waiting upon the Lord; and what then can be more reasonable, than the most cheerful, affectionate, and fervent returns of praise to Him, who commandeth the winds and the seas, and they obey him? Could you have expected such a long epistle so shortly after your sailing. I have felt a particular pleasure and consolation in talking to you, though only on paper, and while you were flying from me a thousand times faster than my pen could move towards you. Give my tender love to our dear parents, and affectionate remembrance to all inquiring friends.

I commend you to God, and the word of his grace. I know I shall not be forgotten in the family, and particularly by my dearest friend; and you may rest assured of your retaining all the interest you can wish to hold, in the heart of your affectionate

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO THOMAS BENNETT, ESQ. JOHN'S ISLAND.

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

With you, my dear Sir, with all the family, and especially the bereaved parents, we sincerely sympathize under the painful stroke of a Father's hand, which has called so many to mourn. But blessed be his name, for the encouragement given in his gospel, that in this case, we are not called to "sorrow, as those who have no hope;" but rather to comfort our own and each other's hearts with the words of Jesus, who gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom; and by the solemn voice of death, as well as in the tender language of the covenant of his grace, in the

ordinance of baptism, says, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Is this lovely and promising, and lately beloved and endeared babe, now with her and our Lord in his heavenly kingdom? She must there be happy; happy forever, and unspeakably more happy, than the affectionate hearts of her fondest connexions on earth, can conceive. Let them not then weep inconsolably for her: but let them humbly and quietly submit, to the holy hand that has so soon smitten their pleasant and flourishing ground, in which they took so much delight, and from which they promised themselves, probably much more, than the creature is permitted to give. Consoled with the consideration, that the idolized creature is so early removed from the evil to come, let all who feel and lament the disappointment of their fond wishes and hopes for this world, under this bereaving Providence, now awaken their solicitude, and offer up their earnest prayers, that it may be divinely sanctified to work for their good, in the promotion of their spiritual interests, and everlasting happiness. The most painful loss, of creature and mortal comforts, will be productive of the richest gain to the soul, which by such means is constrained to resort to, and to rest in, the Lord, the Creator and Redeemer, as its refuge and portion, in the land of the living. To this most desirable and important purpose, may this affecting event, be blessed to all concerned in it! And may the God of all grace, prepare and open the hearts of all who are again called by it into the house of mourning, to receive those consolations of God, which are not small, and which, to sincere believers, and humble mourners, are

made to abound through Christ Jesus, as their sorrows have abounded!

In sympathizing regards, and prayers for the family, Mrs. K. joins with your sincere friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO REV. DR. SPROAT.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 17, 1798.

REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

On Sabbath evening, the 11th inst. Capt. S. handed us your kind letter of the 29th of July. In your present afflicted state, we esteemed it a particular kindness and favour, that you should write to us again so soon after your letter, with which we were favoured by Capt. S. For that favour, Mrs. K. has returned by Capt. S. our thankful acknowledgements, with affectionate expressions of tender sympathy with our dear parents, under their afflictions, and of our desire and hope that they may be removed, or alleviated, as may seem best to the wisdom of God. It is with much satisfaction that we learn by your last letter, that your pains were considerably abated; and that our mother's complaint, though it continued, was not worse. Your complaints respectively, may be troublesome, and your own in particular, may be often distressing; but in my view they do not appear to be very threatening to the hope which we are disposed to cherish, that you may both of you be mercifully spared for years to come, for the great comfort and benefit of your family and friends, and of the church of Christ. In the mean time, if it should please the only wise God, to continue his afflicting hand upon you, I doubt not but that he will give you the sanctified use of your afflic-

tions, by blessing them to the purposes of making you partakers, more and more, of his holiness on earth, and of promoting your growing meetness for that eternal rest and fulness of joy, which, I believe, await you in his presence in heaven ; and that he will also grant you the comfortable evidences of his gracious presence with you, through all the remainder of that *right way*, in which he is conducting you to the city of habitation, prepared for you ; and enable you to continue to possess your souls in patience and peace, believing, hoping, and often rejoicing, in his promises, by which he assures his people of strength according to their day ; that he will never leave nor forsake them ; that all things shall work together for their good ; that no temptation shall overtake them, but what they shall be enabled to bear ; and that through all their tribulations and sufferings, they shall be kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Such is our comfortable hope concerning you, and correspondent to this are our prayers for you. And we desire to be thankful, that, while in all your afflictions we are afflicted, we are also comforted with the persuasion, that to you, belong all those consolations of God, which are not small : that the Lord God is now your hope, who has been your trust from your youth up : that now when you are old, your God will not forsake you ; and that under all your weaknesses and infirmities, you will be enabled to go on in the strength of your Redeemer, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only, declaring the wonders of his grace ; rejoicing with thankful praise in his salvation ; and quietly waiting, with a cheering hope, for your removal to that desirable state in which all the redeemed of the Lord shall meet together, with songs

and everlasting joy upon their heads; and where they shall obtain joy and gladness, sorrow and sighing shall flee away. O how happy are the people that are in such a case, and that have such a joy in prospect! Happy indeed are such, whatever they may now be called to suffer in the flesh; for all their present sufferings, are only light afflictions, and but for a moment, compared with the far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory, which they are working out for them. Pray my dear parents, that together with yourselves, the unworthy writer of this may, through grace, have his share in this happiness! In afflictions of different kinds, I have had, for my time of life, a considerable share; and I have sometimes thought that it was indeed good for me that I have been afflicted. But if they have been really beneficial, so transient have been the good effects of them, or the impressions which my heart has retained of the cause for which they were sent, and of the useful purposes which they were intended and fitted to serve, that it has been hitherto necessary, that the same discipline should be frequently used, to teach me again the same forgotten lessons of wisdom and piety. And if God has any designs of final mercy and love to accomplish in and for me, I have reason to expect, on the same principles, that, should life be spared, many afflictions still await me. May the sanctifying blessings of God, only attend the dispensations of his providence! and then all, will be not only right in itself, but well with respect to us. And could we be always satisfactorily persuaded of this, we should then find little difficulty in saying, concerning God's dealings with us; "Lord, what thou wilt; how thou wilt; and when thou wilt?" But to this purpose, I find great

reason for daily renewing that important petition, "Lord, help thou my unbelief, and increase my faith."

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MISS O. SPROAT.

AFTER THE DEATH OF HER FATHER, AND OTHERS OF THE FAMILY, OF THE YELLOW FEVER.

CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 2, 1798.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER,

YOUR sad story of many and great sorrows, though not altogether sad, as it contained some rich and strong consolations, was conveyed to us by the hand of a good Providence, in the course of the past week.

All the afflictive news which it repeated, we had heard about three or four weeks before, with some additions afterwards, for which we have the satisfaction now to learn, that there was no foundation. During the interval between the time when the intelligence was first communicated to us, and the receipt of your kind letter, we were waiting, not without some anxiety, though, I trust, at the same time, with some degree of quiet submission, for more particular information, which we hoped would be of such a nature as to minister some desirable comfort, under the pressure of our heavy and sore troubles; and, thanks be to a merciful and gracious God, we have not been disappointed.

All these painful bereaving strokes of the hand of a most wise and holy God, I feel, with my poor dear wife, with you my dear afflicted sister, and with our

dear widowed mother, and all the surviving members of our now distressed family; I feel them, as in every respect my own; and with all the others who suffer under them, I take all the tender afflictive share in them, that the obduracy, and stupidity of my heart will admit. Dear N. she was to me a very lovely and pleasant sister. Our worthy brother W. He was my kind and faithful friend, for whom my heart cherished a sincere and growing esteem and affection; and his dear M. though not personally known to me, was affectionately regarded as she was united with him in the nearest and tenderest of all mortal ties. And O, my father!* He was entitled to, and he had from me, all the veneration and love, with which I was capable of honoring any person on earth, under that important name, and in that interesting relation. Concerning them all, I can truly say, that they were not less, if not more, endeared to me, than my father, or any of my brothers or sisters of my own flesh and blood, from whom I was separated, at an early period of life, and with whom I have never since been permitted to enjoy much personal intercourse. So that as far as my nature is capable of feeling, you may be assured, that I enter into all the present feelings of my dear, excellent mother,† and of all her remaining children, my dear sisters and brothers, as well as those of my own wife, my other self, under the heavy load of affliction which it has pleased God to lay upon our poor family. With you, my dear O, who have been called to act so arduous a part, in the trying, awful scene, through which you have been so won-

* Dr. Sproat.

† She was dead when this letter was written, though it was not known to Dr. and Mrs. K.

derfully conducted, by the good hand of your God upon you; and with all the rest of the family, who have not yet been swept away with the flood of death. I feel that in the interesting, tender names, of father, brother, and sister, the desire of our eyes, has been taken away with a stroke! But it is the Lord, who has the most absolute and unquestionable right to do unto all of us, as seemeth unto him good, who has done this; and it becomes us all to be dumb, and not to open our mouths in a single complaint, or to indulge in our hearts a single murmuring thought, against the dispensation. "He is a rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Behold he taketh away, and who can hinder him? Who will say unto him, what doest thou? Though clouds and darkness may be round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. And as he reigns, and will for ever reign, and his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, and will always do that which is right, and can never do any wrong to any of his creatures; it becomes us to rejoice in his government, to be humbly resigned to his disposal, and to be entirely satisfied, that all the will of the Lord should be done. For quiet submission, and sweet acquiescence in his will, we have, as appears by your letter, every reason and motive that we could well desire, under our present trial; which, while it constrains us to weep, reminds us at the same time, that we ought not to sorrow as those who have no hope; since our dear departed friends, at their death, have left us such comfortable ground for hoping, that they have fallen asleep in Jesus, and are now at rest with him. And in such circumstances it becomes us,

not only to weep as though we wept not, but to be satisfied and thankful; persuaded that these events which may appear to be most against us, may be easily made, and certainly are adapted, to work for us. Indeed, if we are in the bonds of that everlasting covenant, which our God has made with his people through his beloved Son, by whose blood it is sealed and established, and which in all things is so ordered, and so sure, that it is sufficient to be all our salvation and all our desire; we may then rest assured, that all things shall infallibly work together for our good. One special good effect, among others, which this very afflictive dispensation of Providence should produce upon all of us who suffer under it, is to withdraw the heart from its dependence upon the creatures, and to engage the soul to seek its rest and happiness in the Creator alone, who is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Happy in their consequences will be those strokes of death, which have smitten the delights of our eyes, and the joys of our hearts, if they be only sanctified, (for which we ought fervently to pray) thus to lead us to choose the Lord alone for our portion, and to rejoice in him, as the God of our salvation, in whose favour alone our life can be found, and from whose love in Christ Jesus our Lord, his people shall never be separated, neither by life, nor by death, by things present, nor by things to come. Let our great care then be to secure, and to keep bright and clear, the evidences of our interest in his favour, and to approve ourselves to him in the right and acceptable improvement of his dealings with us; and in the way of obedience and submission to his will, trusting in the righteousness and merits of our all sufficient Saviour, let us wait upon him for his consolations,

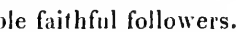
which are not small, and which then he will not fail to grant us in the measure which he sees will be best for us. If we continue submitting ourselves to him, and looking and praying to him, he will in his own time, bring light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, and in his own way make the light afflictions of this life, which are but for a season, work for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory. Considering these things, and remembering that we are strangers and sojourners on earth, whose time of continuance here is short and most uncertain, let us moderate our grief for the loss which we feel from the removal of those who were so valuable and dear to us; and let it be our principal concern, to be followers of our departed christian friends, and of all others, who through faith and patience are gone to inherit the promises; so that with them we may, in due season, meet in that better world, where pious friends, shall, without any fear of a separation, dwell together for ever with their Lord; and mortality, with all its evils, shall be swallowed up in everlasting life and joy.

I desire to be thankful, my dear sister, for the supports and consolations, which you, and my dear wife, and I trust, others of the family, have experienced under this heavy and distressing trial. And we shall, I persuade myself, continue mutually to remember our obligations to pray for each other, that as we are partakers of the same afflictions, we may also be partakers of all seasonable and needful support and comfort, and find, that, as our day is, so is our strength; and that the grace of our Redeemer may be found sufficient for us, to enable us to do and suffer the will of God, with a truly christian temper, to his praise, to the benefit of

others, and to the furtherance of our own salvation! May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth his people in all their tribulations, be the widow's God, and the Father of all her fatherless children, and make his consolations abound to all of us, as our sorrows abound in this vale of tears. And as we shall successively be called hence, may we, by his grace, be prepared for the time of our departure, so that when we are dismissed from the body, we may be admitted to dwell for ever in the presence of our Lord; receive the crown of righteousness, and enjoy that eternal life which he has promised to all his humble faithful followers.

That God may be with you, and bless you, and all the dear afflicted family, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate, sympathizing friend and brother,

ISAAC S. KEITH.



TO REV. DR. G.

CHARLESTON, MARCH 1794.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your very valuable packet, by Capt. G. was received on the third of this month: together with a letter, by the same conveyance, from our dear sister S. In what temper of mind these truly acceptable favours found us, and how they affected us, Solomon has described much better than I could, when he says, "Hope deferred, maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." Nearly three months had passed, since the date of our last in-

telligence from our friends in Philadelphia. During a great proportion of that time, we had been looking out, I fear with some measure of anxiety and impatience, for fresh information; and not without the painful apprehension, from the tenor of our last accounts, that the next might be in some respect or other, again afflictive. What thanks do we owe to our good God, who has so kindly disappointed our fears, and exceeded our hopes, in permitting us once more to hear good tidings, of the health and welfare of yourself and family, and of the remaining members of our own poor family, who had escaped alive from the jaws of the devouring grave, which has swallowed up so many of our best and dearest friends, among the multitudes of your mourning city, whom death has carried away with the desolating violence of a wide spreading flood! After all the messages of pain and sorrow, which for many months past we have been accustomed to receive and expect from poor Philadelphia, to hear that God had stayed his hand in the way of judgement, and seemed to have returned in the exercise of mercy, to our surviving friends and connexions, was welcome news indeed, and a most desirable cordial to our hearts. Blessed be the Lord, and with new and everlasting thanksgivings and praises, be his name exalted, who is merciful and gracious, and will not always chide, nor keep his anger for ever; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies, and make his suffering servants glad, according to the days wherein he has afflicted them!

Concerning the sermon;* perhaps Mrs. K. and myself, are too deeply and tenderly interested, in the sol-

* The funeral sermon on the death of Dr. Sproat.

cmn and affecting occasion of it, to form an impartial judgement of the merit of the performance. To us it appears to be an excellent discourse, such as might be expected from the superior talents of its ingenious author, judiciously adapted to the peculiar circumstances in which it was delivered, and furnishing a just, honorable, and instructive testimony to the piety and worth of the dear departed friends, whose characters it particularly displays; and in a manner which tends to give all the glory of what they were, to the distinguishing grace of God, and persuasively to invite others to become followers of them, as they were of Christ. Your kind expressions, of the high esteem, and filial affection, which I am well assured, your heart felt for your venerable colleague, and his amiable consort, who were to us the best and dearest of parents, have served to enliven and strengthen the feelings of our friendship for you, and to increase the satisfaction, with which we were before cordially disposed to acquiesce in your claim, of being considered as a child of the family, together with ourselves. O that we might all approve ourselves, through grace, the worthy children of such worthy christian parents! And that you and myself, as well as those who are their natural offspring, may be known among the people, as the heirs of their faith and virtues, so that all who see us, may acknowledge, that we are the seed which the Lord hath blessed! May you, and I in particular, my dear friend, be blessed, not only with a large and increasing portion of the christian spirit, which formed the temper and conversation of both those excellent one's of the earth, those precious servants of the Lord, who walked so exemplarily in all the commandments and ordinances of the

Lord, who were so lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death, were scarcely divided : but also of the ministerial gifts and graces, with which our dear father was so richly furnished, and so honorably distinguished, as a faithful, tender, and useful pastor! When such labourers are removed from their work, to their reward ; we who are left in the vineyard, should be awakened to double our diligence, that we may, as far as possible, supply the want of their services : and to this we should be animated by the thought, that if, like them, we are found faithful unto death, we shall, like them, in due time, be relieved from the burden and heat of the day, which it is yet our lot to sustain, and be graciously ordered home, to rest with them from our labours, and receive the promised crown of everlasting life.

What a mournful scene, what a gloomy change, did your poor city exhibit, in consequence of that awful dispensation of a righteous Providence, with which it was visited ! In what solemn language did that visitation say, " Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth !" With what a loud voice did it speak, not only to those who were suffering under it, but to all to whom the tidings of it were published ! " Hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly, lest some worse thing come upon you !" And how much is it to be lamented, that such a correction is likely to produce no better, or more lasting effects, even in your city, which was brought so low under the chastising hand of God ! And that other cities and parts of our country, partakers with you in the same sins, have, in general, already wholly forgotten, if they ever manifested any disposition to consid-

er, that the judgments which were inflicted on the Philadelphians, happened to them for examples to other transgressors! Still, however, it is a consolation, though in some respects a mournful one, to the believer, to know, that such a dispensation will accomplish all the counsel and pleasure of the Lord, which it was appointed to fulfil; perhaps by hardening some sinners, and ripening them for sorer judgments, if not for final destruction, as well as by bringing other sinners to repentance, and promoting the spiritual improvement of the people of God. In these latter respects, much good may be done by it, which is not visible to the eye of man. At all events, it is certain, that the Lord is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works; and every part of the wise, great and good plan of his administration, in its proper time and manner will be completed. Let us be thankful for what he allows us to understand of his perfections, purposes, and works; and when these are concealed from our views, and surpass our comprehension, let us reverently and submissively bow before him, and humbly adore the infinite and incomprehensible God, whose thoughts and ways are as far above ours, as the heavens are higher than the earth.

In this city, while Philadelphia was sitting solitary, and sorely weeping in the days of her affliction, and her miseries, some tenderly sympathized with her, many were alarmed for themselves, numbers of all denominations united in observing a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, (October 23,) and I know not but that a very few began to think that it was almost time, if they did not actually form some purposes, to repent and turn from their transgressions, that iniquity might

not also be their ruin. But the direful storm did not reach us; the black cloud was dispersed; our sky became again clear and serene; and then the little appearances of goodness, that were seen among us, amidst many shocking symptoms of insensibility and obduracy, that still prevailed, were like the morning cloud; and as the early dew, they passed away. During the succeeding season, every species of dissipation and licentious folly, and particularly all the incalculable evils which issue from that modern Pandora's box, the *theatre*, have reigned and triumphed with all their former insolence, if not with increasing audacity. These things have made the hearts of those who fear God among us, often tremble with apprehensions for the consequences in which they are likely to end. For my own part, I have long been of the opinion with you, that if reformation prevent not, judgement is not far distant. So judicious on this subject, and so applicable to the present circumstances of our situation, were some of the reflections contained in your letter, that I have taken the liberty, of inserting a paragraph or two of them in our city Gazette; a liberty which I thought the laws of friendship, and your zeal to do good, would authorize. The same freedom has been used with a few pages of Dr. H's pamphlet, who in drawing the picture of Philadelphia's sins, the parent of her plagues, has presented us with an equally just and striking likeness of the iniquities of Charleston. All the hands that can afford any help in the war with the reigning and raging vices and follies of the times, ought, I think, to be brought into action. And if your strong arm can be stretched out so far, as to give the enemy a stroke here, I hope you will not regret the execution which it may do, or

the wound that it may inflict, or the alarm which it may spread. But after all, it is certainly not the arm of flesh, on which we are to depend for success; and therefore, as you have desired us to pray for you, so do you remember to pray for us. And may you, and we, and all the professed friends of God, unite and pray without ceasing, till the arm of the Lord awake and put on strength, and get him the victory, and triumph gloriously, in the destruction of the works of the devil, and in reviving, supporting, and promoting his own work and interests, in the midst of these years.

It is with great pleasure that I reflect on your preservation, to be employed, I hope, as a zealous and useful instrument, in carrying on this great design; now especially, when your pious fellow labourer, having finished the work which was given him to do, has gone to rest from his labours, and to receive the reward awaiting the good and faithful servant. I had no doubt but that you were led by the hand of God, from the scene of the awful calamity, to which so many of the inhabitants of your city were victims. Your return to Philadelphia, must have been humbling and afflicting beyond what language could express. How changed the circumstances, in which you resumed the exercise of your public ministry in your congregation! What a change, in particular, in the family of our dear father, your venerable colleague! I suppose you did not on that occasion forget to feel for us. Be assured we felt very tenderly for you.

It is no small consolation, amidst all the other strong consolations, which the God of all grace and comfort, has infused into the bitter cup of our great and various sorrows, to learn, that your impaired health has been

so mercifully restored, and that amidst all your increased labours, your strength has been so wonderfully increased. Is not this a most desirable confirmation, by experience, of the faithfulness of Him, who has promised, "that as thy days, so shall thy strength be?" The truth of this, Mrs. K. and I would hope, her poor husband also, in some small measure with her, has comfortably experienced under all the weight of that part of your trials, which has fallen so heavily upon our afflicted family. Let us all unite our songs of thanksgivings and praises, to our compassionate God and Saviour, who, in the midst of deserved wrath, remembers undeserved mercies; and as our afflictions and sorrows have abounded, has made our consolations also to abound, by Christ Jesus. Let it be our concern and prayer, that the trial of our faith, and of all the graces which ought to be particularly exercised in such circumstances, may be sanctified to the purposes of strengthening, improving, and brightening them, so that they may be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Then may we hope, that our God, who has wisely led us all this way in the wilderness, to humble us, and to prove us, will, by this dispensation, do us good in the latter end; and for the temporal evils which we have suffered, render to us double in spiritual and heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus. I sometimes begin to wonder how you can perform all the ordinary parochial duties of so large a congregation as yours, and yet prepare *so many and such discourses as yours* for the entertainment, and, I hope, for the instruction and improvement of the public, through the medium of the press. But a second thought reminds me that it is by the grace of God, that

you are what you are, and that you do what you do. Remember this, and be humble and thankful. Remember also the account which you have to give of your *five talents;* and be more and more diligent in occupying with them. Compared with you, I appear to myself to be honored and entrusted with only one talent. This thought, I hope, I do not allow myself to indulge, with a view to excuse my ingratitude and unfaithfulness, to the great Lord of all, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift; but with a desire, that it should make and keep me humble. And the consideration of the very poor improvement which I have made of this, if it has not been wholly buried, ought to cover me with shame and confusion of face, and to melt my soul into contrition and sorrow; and it does actually often awaken my fear for the event of that day, when our Lord shall come to reckon with his servants. May the Lord grant, that we may both find mercy of the Lord in that day!

When will your other sermons, which you mention, appear in print? Allow me to be a debtor to you for both of them, without allowing yourself to cherish any hope, that such favours will be repaid in kind. But for your encouragement and comfort remember, that it is more blessed to give, than to receive.

Mrs. K. returns her very thankful acknowledgements to you for that part of your excellent letter, which relates particularly to her. In the exercise of that faith, which is not only the great principle of spiritual action, but also as you justly represent it, of spiritual consolation in the christian, she was, I think, wonderfully strengthened, in the late season of great affliction, in which it has been extraordinarily tried.

Through grace, I hope, she has glorified God in the day of visitation, and done some service to the cause of religion, by manifesting its power, in supporting and comforting the soul, under the pressure of some of the greatest troubles with which this evil world abounds. She is, however, always complaining of herself; and I have always reason to consider her conduct as a reproach to me; and this will not surprise you, if you yet feel any thing of the power of the law of sin; or if you have ever been much in the company of christians better than yourself.

We were not a little shocked to hear from your public papers, that your new play-house was to be opened about the beginning of February, amidst all the apprehensions entertained, of a return of the awful calamity with which your city has been already so sorely scourged. The renewal of that scourging, I am inclined to think, will depend more upon your moral behaviour, than upon any natural causes. And in this view, so heaven daring, and provoking a return to folly, bodes ill. If the voice of the rod which you have felt, be not heard; may you not expect that some heavier and more smarting strokes of it will be inflicted upon you? Or if such chastisement shall be withheld, will it not be, because the Lord has said; Why should ye be smitten any more? Ye will revolt still more and more? Rather let your city and ours, and you and myself, as individuals, be chastised in any way in mercy, than thus given up in judgement.

Concerning our coming to Philadelphia: we dare not yet venture to form any conclusion: but desire to discern, and submit to the Lord's will, to follow his

guidance, and wait his time. Help us in this matter, as well as in all our other affairs, by your prayers.

In affectionate regards and prayers for Mrs. G. as well as yourself, Mrs. K. unites with your unworthy friend and brother,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

P.S. We have been informed that the Rev. J. Smith, has been instrumental in adding 60 or 70 persons, to the number of the communicants in his congregation, since the dreadful fever took place in your city. If this be true, and if these persons be hopeful converts, this circumstance affords strong encouragement to hope, that the awful calamity with which you were visited, has not been a lost dispensation, and that it may yet be followed with a more extensive blessing. Such appearances demand fervent praises; and furnish ground for pleasing expectations.

TO MR. AND MRS. L.

CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 6, 1796.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

With cordial affection, and a very tender sympathy, I take my part with you in your affliction, under the late bereaving stroke of the holy hand of God, by which he has taken from you, your dear child; a sweet lovely babe, whose pleasing, charming countenance, forcibly impressed my mind, as I find it did the minds of some other observers, when he was solemnly presented to the Lord, and received into the

church at his baptism. On that occasion, and in the very serious and interesting transaction with the great and blessed God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, to which you were then called ; I trust you were, through his grace with you, enabled in sincerity, and without reserve, to give him up, and dedicate him to the Lord, who had first given him to you ; desirous, and hoping, and believing, and rejoicing in the pleasing and comfortable persuasion, that your offering would be graciously accepted ; and that he should be the Lord's in the bonds of the well ordered, sure, and everlasting covenant, of which our dear Saviour is the blessed Mediator ; and which in all its glorious provisions, and great and precious promises, is fitted to be all our salvation, and all our desire. Was it not then the ultimate and highest aim of your affectionate desires and prayers in favour of your dear and beloved infant, that he might be finally and for ever with the Lord, in his heavenly kingdom ? Well ; you now have your wish. And how soon has it been accomplished, and gratified to the fullest extent ? The lovely babe, that was lately the desire of your eyes, and that shared, I suppose, a sufficient portion of the tenderest affections of your hearts, has been, I doubt not, washed from the guilt and pollution of his nature, derived from fallen Adam, by the blood of Christ our Saviour, and sanctified by the Spirit of grace, and is now safely and happily lodged in the arms and bosom of its Heavenly Father, and Divine Redeemer, with all those blessed little children, of which the kingdom of Heaven eminently consists ; and where it is infinitely better provided for, than it could be with you, in this present evil world. From thence, as you know he cannot, so, I believe, you would not dare to

wish, that he should return to you, to partake with you in the various evils of this state of sin and sorrow, from which he has been so early and so kindly taken away. And do you hope, that you will in due time go to him, to dwell there with him, and with all who are redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb, and are there made perfect in holiness, and raised to fulness of joy in the presence of the Lord? In the mean time, have you the consolation of believing and being assured, that the Lord doth all things well; that all his paths towards you, are mercy and truth; and that all things, through his sanctifying blessing, shall work together for your good? Surely then you must feel your obligations, and I trust you will, through grace, be accordingly disposed, to weep for your temporary loss of the satisfactions and pleasures, which you were beginning to enjoy in your dear babe, as though you wept not: to rejoice in all the remaining comforts of life, as though you rejoiced not; holding them also resigned to the Lord's disposal, and ready to be given up to him at his call; to glorify him by a cheerful submission to his will in all things, and cordial approbation of all his dealings with you, and dispensations towards you, and earnest prayers and endeavours that you may comply with the wise and gracious designs of them all; and to aspire more ardently, and to press forward more diligently and vigorously, in the way of faith in the Redeemer, and obedience to his gospel, towards that blessed world, where there shall be no more sin nor death; nor any more tears, nor occasions of them; but where holiness shall be complete; and joy shall be full and ever-growing, and all the work shall be love and praise, through all the ages of a blessed and glorious immor-

tality. With such views of the wise counsels of God our Saviour, respecting ourselves, and all that we hold dear to us, and of the salutary tendency and desirable effects of all his dispensations, even the most afflictive that we have ever felt, or may yet be called to suffer; the aspect of affliction appears to be greatly changed. Notwithstanding all the severity with which, in some cases, it seems to frown upon us, it must be, at the same time, presented to our minds, as a genuine fruit of our Heavenly Father's love, and as a necessary and seasonable proof of his covenant mercy and faithfulness; ordering a painful trial of a few moment's continuance, for the desirable purposes of yielding to us the present peaceable fruits of righteousness, and of working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Under the impressions which such views, accompanied by the influences of the good Spirit of God, are adapted to make upon our hearts, we shall feel ourselves led to say, with some small measure at least, of the mind that was in our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, in respect to the greatest trial and conflict that may be appointed to us; "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it; thy will be done!" When his grace has brought us to this temper and mind, it will not only "make submission very sweet, in what is most contrary to nature" (as my dear Mrs. Keith, often and often said she had felt it, and as, I trust, I also have found in my own experience,) but it will dispose us to bless the chastising hand of our Heavenly Father, in the most painful dispensations of his providence, and to say, with our excellent friend Newton,

"'Tis *my happiness* below,
Not to live without the cross;

But the Saviour's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss.

Trials must and will befal;
But, with *humble faith* to see
Love inscribed upon them all;
This is happiness to me.

Trials make the *promise sweet;*
Trials give new *life to prayer;*
Trials *bring me to his feet;*
Lay me *low*, and *keep me there.*"

ALSO COWPER.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are *big with mercies*, and *shall break*
In blessings on your head."

AND NEWTON AGAIN.

"Since *all* that I meet, shall work for *my good;*
The *bitter* is *sweet*, the med'cine is food;
Tho' painful at present, 't will cease before long:
And then, O how pleasant, The conqueror's song!"

Through grace, I think I have been enabled, under my great trial, to enter a little more deeply and fully into the spirit of the above lines, and of such sentiments and views as they express. And under the influence of them, and in some measure, of the experience of their power and efficacy, I think, I found and felt, that it was *good*, that it was *desirable* for me to be afflicted, as I was, in the tenderest feelings of my nature, and the dearest interests and comforts of this mortal life; and I believe I owe it as a debt of gratitude to the God of all grace, for his most unmerited, free, rich, sovereign grace experienced, to acknowledge to his praise, that as my afflictions abounded, so his consolations also were made to abound to me, by Christ Jesus, my Intercessor and Redeemer; so that the season which was in many respects the most trying that I have ever suffer-

ed, was at the same time made, in other respects, the most comfortable that I have ever known and enjoyed. I would hope that it has not thus far passed, without some important and desirable benefits and advantages attending it. But, alas! how transient will be the best impressions produced by it, without the continued influence of the Divine Comforter and Sanctifier! How soon have some of my best purposes, formed in this interesting, memorable season of conflict and comfort, been forgotten, or miserably failed in the execution! Oh, how soon has my evil heart of unbelief, wandered and departed from its rest, and establishment in the Lord my God and Saviour! With what various temptations has my soul been assaulted and shaken! What hours and days of darkness, stupidity, distraction, and dejection, all as the bitter fruits of my sins and follies, have I known within a few weeks past! Yet, when I deserved, for all my sins and folly in forsaking my own mercies, and following after lying vanities, to be cast off forever: I am still encouraged to hope, that the Lord has not utterly forsaken me, but has again and again restored to me his free spirit of grace, to draw me again to himself, at a throne of grace in prayer and supplication; to excite and enable me to renew my repentance, and application by faith, to the atoning and healing blood of Jesus my Redeemer; to repeat and ratify again my violated vows and engagements of a better obedience and submission to the holy will of God; and to raise me again to some renewed experiences of the consolations of his pardoning mercy, and of the joys of his salvation. Oh what a God and Saviour have we to deal with, to go, and *return* to, to trust and to hope in! Be humble, be thankful, O my

soul: love and fear him with all thy power: rest in him alone as thy refuge and portion, and in promoting his glory, and shewing forth his praise, let all thy activity and zeal, be henceforth employed! And may thy grace, my Lord and Saviour, be made sufficient for me, and thy strength perfect in my weakness, for these desirable purposes! Pray for me, my dear friends, for I feel my need of the helping prayers of all who love me, and feel any interest in my concerns. When I am enabled to pray at all, if ever I do pray, I endeavour, from time to time, to offer up some petitions for you: for you my dear Mrs. L. that the Lord may, in his own way be pleased (and I would hope, that your late afflictions is one of the means which he has appointed, and may be pleased to sanctify in order) to bring you home to himself, and to the happy experience of that rest, which your soul can find only in your Redeemer; and of that salvation which is in him, with eternal glory; and that you my dear Mrs. L. may be more and more established and built up in your faith in the Saviour, on whom you have believed, may more and more grow in the knowledge of him, and in grace and usefulness; and in meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light! While I very sensibly feel, and often lament, the want of the improving and comforting society of your dear father and mother, and those branches of their family, including yourself, that are now in the country, I rejoice in the prospect and hope of your being favoured now, for a short time at least, with the desirable advantages of the public means of grace among you there, under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Waddell. May the Lord abundantly bless his labours among you, during his stay; and determine his

final settlement there, if that would be most for his glory, and the good of his church! My health is rather better than some weeks ago, though still very tender and delicate. But it is a wonder of mercy, that it is restored to that measure in which I now enjoy it. May you and yours enjoy that degree of health, and every other comfort of this life, that may be best for you, and be abundantly blessed with all spiritual, heavenly, and everlasting blessings, in Christ Jesus!

I am very sincerely, and affectionately, your friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO REV. DR. G.

CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 10, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE arrival of Capt. G. on the 30th ult. brought me three letters from you, under dates of September 21, October 24, and November 16; for all of which I cordially thank you, and particularly for the second, which is the longest; partly on that account, and partly as it is wholly occupied with a subject peculiarly, and very deeply interesting to me, in my present state of great and painful trial, and contains a variety of important observations, admirably suited to my feelings, my wants, and my experiences, in this trying situation, it is regarded and felt by me, as the best of the three, which are all indeed very good. The spirit of God, I trust, has directed your thoughts and your pen, so that you have been led to write a word, and many words indeed, in season, and with the skill of a

distinguishing judgement, and the tenderness of christian sympathy and love, to a weary, wounded, and greatly afflicted and tempest-tossed soul. The greater part of the thoughts which you have suggested in the body of your letter, particularly alluded to, had indeed previously occurred to my own mind, and were impressed upon it, as I trust, by the divine Sanctifier and Comforter, with that divine light and energy, which for several weeks, made the season, which was in many respects, the most painfully trying that I have ever known, a time of the greatest refreshing, from the presence of the Lord; of the strongest consolation, the sweetest peace, and the liveliest hope, that I have ever experienced. Yet the new and excellent arrangement, and the forcible manner in which your fertile, judicious, and nervous pen, has again recalled them to my remembrance, and presented them to my view, has served to make me feel them with a new impression, and I would hope, not without some additional advantage and improvement. And shall I now acknowledge to you, that after following you step by step, and reading attentively, and with much satisfaction, what you had so kindly, and so well written, I was the most forcibly struck with some observations towards the conclusion of the letter, which are adapted to excite the most painful sensations, but which I have, to my great mortification, and with inexpressible regret, found wonderfully co-incident with my late bitter experience? Yes, my friend, I have thought, "that under the first pressure of my affliction, God was pleased to give me such views of his sovereign right to dispose of my dear partner," and of every thing that my heart was disposed to hold most dear and valuable, and important to me in my connex-

ion with her; and of his doing all things well, "and such freedom of soul, sweetly to acquiesce in his will, as were effectual to mingle the tears of joy, with those of mourning." But as you, by something like a spirit of prophesy, have suggested, I have found, "that I had no security for the continuance of so desirable a frame of mind." I have since indeed felt, "that it may not only be very difficult," but that I have actually been, altogether unable, "to preserve a right temper, in other circumstances of an afflictive nature, which to others," and to myself in prospect, might have appeared to be much less trying. Since some of the first weeks of this memorable season of trial and comfort, oh! how weak has my faith been found! How have I been shaken by various temptations, on the foundation where I thought I stood most securely; the atonement, righteousness, and intercession of the Redeemer, and the glorious provisions, and the great and precious promises of the covenant of grace, of which he is the blessed Mediator; while my interest in these, have been hid from my view! How soon have my best impressions been lost, or greatly abated, and my best purposes been forgotten, or miserably failed in the execution! How soon has my light been exchanged for darkness; and my peace for trouble! And how many hours and days of stupidity, distraction, and dejection, have I lately known! Lord what is man! Oh, how deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked is the human heart! And how artful and powerful is that adversary, who goeth about continually seeking whom he may destroy, or harass, and injure, to the extent of his abilities! And oh! what a God and Saviour, have we to go, and return to, to trust, and to hope in; who, as a

father pitieth his children, pitieth them that fear him; who has compassion for their infirmities, forgives the multitude of their transgressions, according to the multitude of his tender mercies; heals their backslidings; subdues the power of their unbelief and their iniquities; bruises down satan in due time under their feet; and instead of casting them away for ever, as he justly might, for their sin and folly in wandering from him, and forsaking their own mercies, in the foolish pursuit of lying vanities, graciously restores to them again and again, his *free* spirit of grace, to draw them again to himself, in the exercises of repentance and faith, prayer and hope, and the renewal of their forgotten, violated vows of a better obedience and submission to his holy will, for the time to come; when thus humbled again before him, raises them again to some renewed experiences of his pardoning mercy, and of the joys of his salvation! Thus, I sometimes dare to think and hope, the Lord hath dealt with me, who am less than the least of all his mercies, and the very chief of sinners. Oh! my soul, and all that is within me, bless the Lord for all his wise counsels, and gracious dealings: fear and love him, who corrects thee to humble and prove thee, and to do thee good in the latter end; who by the various changes through which he leads thee, takes the wisest and best methods, to discover thy weakness and insufficiency; thy sins and follies, and to manifest the glory of his own abounding all-sufficient grace, and astonishing and everlasting love. Rest in him alone, as thy refuge and portion, and thy All in all: and in promoting his glory, and shewing forth his praise, and in following thy dearest of all mortal friends, and all other christian friends, now inheriting the promises

in his heavenly kingdom, and the enjoyment of that everlasting rest, which remaineth for the people of God, let all thy activity and zeal, be henceforth employed! And may the grace of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, be made sufficient for me, and his strength perfect in my weakness, for these important and desirable purposes. To these purposes, help me, my friend, with your prayers. In return for this most important office of love, that absent friends can render to each other, I shall endeavour, when I can pray for myself, to offer up for you also, from time to time, some petitions, that the God of all grace may supply all your wants, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus, so as to furnish you thoroughly, for all your work and warfare, and particularly for the purpose of sanctifying to your good, and to the benefit of the church, that bodily affliction with which you are exercised, which at the first view, seems to wear a frowning aspect towards yourself and your people; but which may be appointed, ordered, and conducted, in manifold wisdom, faithful love, and tender mercy to both. You have not, I presume, forgotten what you have written to me; that is, "when the chastisements of Heaven, are sanctified, they are not judgements, but mercies." Of the truth of this I am well assured: in the experience of it, I have thought that I have been enabled, sincerely to rejoice; may I, and may you feel, more and more of its power and happy influence upon our temper and conduct, under our respective trials!

Under my great and sore troubles, which the Lord has shewed me, it has been no small consolation to me, and indeed, one of the greatest that I have enjoyed, to perceive the continuance of hopeful appearances, that the

Lord has been, and is still, carrying on a work of grace among us in this part of his church. To the advancement of this, the judgements which he has executed among us by fire and mortal sickness, during the past seasons, have, I trust, been made happily subservient, through the attending influences of his sanctifying spirit. If the particular afflictions, or the consolations under them, which I have experienced, may have been, as I am led to hope they have been, in some measure conducive, through the same sanctifying blessing, to the benefit, and the furtherance of the salvation of any of my beloved and affectionate people, who have most kindly taken their part in my afflictions, and all my concerns; blessed be the name of God; and for such a desirable purpose, I think it an honor, privilege, and happiness, to be called to suffer the greatest trials with which it pleases the only wise God our Saviour, to exercise his people and his ministers, in this probationary state.

My health is in some degree graciously restored to me, from a state of extreme and alarming weakness, to which I was reduced by sickness, in August and September. That measure of it which I now enjoy, is however but small, and attended with some threatening symptoms. I have been, and am, sufficiently admonished, to remind me that the time is short, and that I must ere long, and may very soon, put off this tabernacle, and pass from all earthly scenes, to my everlasting abode in the world of spirits. Oh! may I be effectually awakened, and engaged, through the grace of God with me, to do the work of my day, before that night comes, in which no man can work, and so to acquit myself in the duties, and under the trials, of my christian profession,

and ministerial office, that when I finish my course here, I may enter into the future, full, and everlasting joy of my Lord; in his kingdom of glory, where, with the late dear partner of all my cares and joys in this mortal life, and with all the spirits of the just made perfect, I may glorify the adorable Author of my being, redemption, and happiness, infinitely better than I ever have done, or ever can do, in this evil world!

Your unworthy brother, and friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, OCTOBER 15, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

Very pressing engagements, prevented my answering your kind letter of the 20th ult. at the time of my receiving it.

The sentiments which you have suggested in your letter concerning the Missionary business in our country, accord wonderfully with my own on this subject; and of course have given me much pleasure. For some considerable time past, I have been revolving many of the very thoughts, which you have so well, and so feelingly expressed, in my own mind; and on several occasions, I have given some pretty plain, and broad hints in my public discourses from the pulpit, relative to what is doing by others in Europe and the United States, and to what appears to me to be our duty in Carolina, in this most worthy undertaking, and most important of all causes. But as my attention and

time are fully occupied, with the stated duties of my office and situation, during the absence of my colleague; I have not found leisure for digesting a plan, which might be best suited to our circumstances here, and which it might be most expedient for us to adopt, in pursuit of this great and benevolent design. Something, I think, ought to be done; and something, I trust, will ere long be done, in the way of making an attempt, at least, at this good work, by the friends of Zion in our church; and I would hope, by others of different denominations. One of our worthy deacons, Mr. Charles Snowden, in the course of conversation this week, introduced this subject with a warm interest in it, before I had spoken a word to him on the subject. We ought, I think, to have made earlier advances in this business, and now we ought to redeem the time, and double our diligence, for helping it forward, in one way or another. Yet there is room for our co-operation, and for the desirable fruits of our labours of love, and of our liberality, to be diffused far and wide through the land; especially among our frontier inhabitants, if not among the savage tribes. "Mercy shall be built up for ever." The glorious things spoken of Zion, shall be fulfilled in their appointed time. The fulness of Jews and Gentiles shall be brought into the church of Christ. The world seems to be now groaning and travailing in pain, with great events, favourable in their ultimate tendency, to the extension, peace and prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom. Let us pray, and hope, let us bestow, and labour, for its advancement, in the spirit of those devout, catholic, elegant and nervous lines of Watts;

"From all that dwell below the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise,
Let the Redeemer's name be sung,
Through every land, by every tongue."

A few days ago, Mr. Josiah Smith, read me a part of a letter which he had lately received from Mr. Snowden of Philadelphia, informing that Mr. Boudinot, director of the mint, had lately presented to the corporation of the general Assembly of the Presbyterian church, for the purposes of promoting the interests of the gospel among our frontier inhabitants, the negroes, and the Indian tribes, *ten thousand acres of land, worth one dollar and an half per acre, equal to* 15,000 *Dolls.* with *four hundred Dollars, of* 8 *per cent stock*, designed for payment of taxes, hereafter arising. And further, that a gentleman, a minister, who had been authorized to make collections for the missionary purposes, had received *three thousand dollars*. These are surely noble benefactions, and encouraging beginnings. May all that love Zion, and seek her good, prosper more and more, for time and eternity! And with them, may your lot and mine be found! Your's affectionately,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO ——

OCTOBER 27, 1801.

DEAR SIR,

Accept now my sincerely grateful acknowledgements, for both your friendly communications; which on several accounts, have afforded me much satisfaction; and especially as the first more largely, and

the latter more concisely, furnish pleasing indications, of your being under the influence of the christian temper, and an hopeful learner in the school of Christ. The complaints against yourself, which you so feelingly express, are no bad evidences of your having obtained, through a Divine teaching, some just knowledge of yourself; and their effects will be highly salutary and beneficial, if they are improved, as I trust they will be by you, according to their proper tendency, to the purposes of rendering, the Saviour of sinners, the Physician of sin sick souls, more and more precious to you; and of engaging you to prize more highly, his gospel, as the warrant of your hope, and the instrument of your consolation. Let it be remembered, that humility is the first lesson, which we are required to learn, when we are called to take upon us the yoke of the meek, and lowly Jesus; that humility is an essential, distinguishing, and most amiable feature in the christian character; and that in the course of the life, which, as christians, we are to lead, by faith in the Son of God, we may ever estimate the degree to which we have attained in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, by the measure of real humility which we possess. And to lay us low in humility, and at the same time, to exalt our Redeemer in our esteem, how needful and desirable are those discoveries of our depravity, our weaknesses, our failures, our follies, our offences, which are occasioned by the business, the enjoyments, the temptations, of every day; and those views of the compassion, the love, the wisdom, the power, the righteousness, the intercession of Christ, to which the spirit of God, by the instrumentality of his word, most sensibly raises the minds of believers, when they would

otherwise be more ready to sink in despondence, or to yield to discouragement! All the paths of the Lord, towards his people, the genuine followers of Christ, are mercy and truth: though in these, they are often led, like the blind, as in a way which they understand not, till they find, as they surely will, in due time, that all the things which appeared to be most against them, were working most certainly and effectually for their good. May the only wise God, our Saviour, and the God of all grace, teach and dispose us, to be more and more satisfied, that his wisdom should guide us, and that our best interests should be promoted, by the means which he may choose; though the most mortifying to our natural vanity, and self-sufficiency, and the most painful, to our vicious self-love. In a word, may the Lord increase our faith; then we shall certainly have increase in every grace; in those humiliations for our deficiences and transgressions, and in those fruits of love, and of holiness, by which he will be most glorified, and ourselves most benefitted!

As to the Society, &c. it was not our expectation, that contributions towards the formation, and support of it, would be obtained at present, to any considerable extent; or from any but those who felt themselves disposed or interested, on some principle or other, in promoting the great cause of religion; and who cherished at the same time, sentiments friendly to the Independent or Congregational churches. That the idea of emancipation being connected with our design, should be entertained by any, and be suggested as an objection, is indeed surprising. With as good ground might we be suspected of aiming at that object, in the stated exercise of our gospel ministry in this city. It should be re-

membered, that every member of the Association is interested, as an owner, in that species of property, against which emancipation would operate, and ought, therefore, to be in the judgement of charity, considered as believing that their conduct in holding that property, is justifiable; and that in consistency with this, they may employ their endeavours, and use their influence, for promoting, as extensively as possible, and in all practicable and promising ways, the knowledge of that blessed gospel, which, while it proves the power of God, to the eternal salvation of every believer, has the most direct tendency, and powerful efficacy, towards making men better, and more faithful in every relation, and more contented and happy in every situation in which they are placed by the wise and good providence of God.

In the commencement of this Society, we thought it most expedient, that the *members* of it, should belong to the Congregational churches, in order to secure that harmony of sentiment, which appeared to be very important in the first measures, that should be attempted to be pursued, with a view to the accomplishment of a great object; while our resources were not expected to be very ample. Should it hereafter appear to be advisable to admit persons of other denominations, as members of the Society, I trust that the first members of it will be found possessed of a sufficient degree of liberality and zeal, readily and cordially to receive such to co-operate with them in so good a work. In this city, donations are already engaged by subscription, to the amount of about $700, and also about sixteen members, for the payment of 5 dollars annually. And a considerable addition, both of donations and members, is yet expected. Your affectionate friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO HIS SISTER.

CHARLESTON, JULY 15, 1805.

MY DEAR SISTER,

WHILE on a short visit at our brother and sister M's, last fall, I wrote you a few lines in great haste, informing you, that my dear wife, with her sister, Miss M. L. and myself, had spent a considerable part of the preceding season in travelling, first by sea to New-York, and then by land to Ballston Springs, and thence through New-England, &c. &c. chiefly with a view to the benefit of Mrs. K's health, which had been for several years greatly impaired. This measure was adopted and pursued, after the skill of physicians, and the power of medicine, had been long tried, without much effect, as the one which seemed to promise most success. But it did not please the Lord, in whose hands are all events, to render it effectual to the attainment of the desired object. For a time, indeed, it seemed to be attended with the happiest effects. All the pleasing, flattering hopes, however, which were thus raised, soon terminated in painful disappointment.

We returned to Charleston by land; after travelling from New-York, in various places and directions, about 2000 miles, from the middle of July. Generally, while riding, my dear Mrs. K. was sensibly better, but within a few days after reaching home, which was on the 2d of December, she was confined to her chamber, in consequence of the increase of a cold which she had taken on the road. At different times, her cough was

attended with a spitting of blood. And from this period, her former complaints, increased by this severe cold, and alarming hæmorrhage, began to assume decidedly the form of a consumption, of the nervous class; under which she languished, till the 15th day of May last; when, between six and seven o'clock, in the morning of the Lord's day, she left me, and her other connexions and friends here, in the house of mourning, and triumphantly entered upon the enjoyment of that everlasting sabbath, which is celebrated by the spirits of the just, made perfect in glory.

"*To her—to die, was indeed great gain.*" But *to me*, how *great is the loss*, which I suffer in being *again bereaved* of the nearest and dearest of all human connexions; and again deprived of all the desirable advantages and comforts, which were found in the society of a worthy and amiable Christian friend, united with me in the tenderest of all mortal ties. But the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. He doth all things well; and under his administration, and through his sanctifying blessing, all things shall most certainly and effectually work together for good, to those who love him. And blessed be his name for all the rich, and strong consolations, with which he has mingled and sweetened the bitter cup, which he has given me to drink; while he calls me to mourn under this bereaving stroke of his holy hand!

The first months of my dear wife's illness, were to her a season of great trial. Her affectionate heart, feeling the full force of a naturally warm and tender attachment to her beloved connexions and friends, was sometimes almost overwhelmed with the thought of a final separation from them, as to this world, which she began

to anticipate as near at hand. Still more was she distressed with a consciousness of many spiritual infirmities, and of various guilt; especially when she considered herself as an ungrateful backslider, who had suffered the cares and the enjoyments of this life, to abate the zeal and delight, which she had experienced for sometime after she began to walk in wisdom's ways, under the influence of her first love. And at the same time, the temptations of the artful, malicious adversary, were frequently employed to darken and perplex her mind; and more particularly to increase her natural dread of suffering; and especially her fear of the *pain* of dying. He was, however, never permitted to prevail so far against her, as to deprive her wholly of the hope in her Redeemer, which she had cherished, and which she was enabled to hold fast, from the period of her first making an open profession of her faith in him, and of her being received into the communion of his church, which was about seven years ago. As to her hope, she repeatedly observed, that she had often, and often examined the foundation of it, and earnestly prayed, that if it were not a genuine, well-founded, christian hope, it might be torn from her, and she left destitute and forlorn, till she should obtain a better. But finding that it rested solely on the atonement, the righteousness, the intercession, and the promises of her Redeemer, she was led to rejoice in him, as an holy Saviour, who saves his people from their sins, and makes them holy; while it disposed her to renounce, with abhorrence, the idea of recommending herself to the favour of God, by any good works that she had ever done, or ever could do, and proved an anchor to her soul, amid the most violent assaults of temptation, and under the

most humbling discoveries of her own corruptions, failings, and offences. She thought that her hope was supported by scripture evidence, and that to give it up, would be ungrateful to her Lord, and a wrong done to her own soul. Yet, such were her views of the corruptions of her nature, and such her conflicts in the christian warfare, that she enjoyed, for a long time, but little of the peculiar satisfactions or consolations of religion. And while in this uncomfortable frame of mind, she would frequently, and most pathetically repeat, that excellent expressive hymn of Cowper, the 98th, Rippon's Selection; or the 3d in the 1st Book of Olney Hymns.

Oh, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame:
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew,
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?

What peaceful hours I then enjoy'd,
How sweet their memory still;
But now I find an aching void,
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame:
So purer light shall mark the road,
That leads me to the Lamb.

At length the scene became most happily changed in *her favour*, and to the unspeakable consolation of her *sympathizing friends*. This change from an anxious and gloomy, to a calm and heavenly, frame of mind, took place more than two months prior to her dissolution. The Spirit of God, having brought her down to a state of deep humiliation and contrition, began then clearly and satisfactorily to bear witness with her spirit, that she was a child of God, through her union, by a vital faith, with his beloved Son, and that he was exercising her with all the afflictions and trials which she endured, not for his pleasure, but for her profit, that she might become a partaker, in a larger measure, of his holiness. Being now enabled, with humble confidence, to claim an interest in his favour and love, while relying with a cheerful, stedfast trust, on the atoning, cleansing blood, and justifying righteousness, of Jesus, her broken, sorrowing heart, was healed and revived; nor were the consolations of God any longer small with her. Her soul now filled, if not with sensible joy, at least with solid, settled peace in believing, no longer felt its former difficulty and reluctance, in giving up all the endearments and comforts, which she had experienced, or could ever hope to find, in the society of her dearest relatives and friends on earth; for now all her hope and confidence, her affections and joys, were concentrated in that Divine Friend, *her blessed and dear Redeemer*, as she constantly called him, who, she was assured, could alone effectually help and comfort her, and would never leave nor forsake her. And under the influence of a stedfast faith, and lively hope in him, and in the cheering prospect of that eternal life, which God has, in and through him, promised to believers, she was now

enabled to view, the certain, steady, solemn approach of death, with an undismayed heart; and not only so, but with an ardent desire to depart, that she might be with her Saviour and her God. "Oh! (said she, at different times, within the week before her death,) Oh, that the blessed hour were come! Oh, that it might be this night! or this moment, if it were the will of God; for then I shall be happy, happy, happy."

Two or three days before she died, when her physician was feeling her pulse, she asked him, how her pulse seemed to beat. On his answering, "Quite strong yet;" she expressed in her countenance much disappointment, and said; "I had hoped, that you could have told me, that it was quite weak and low." Nothing indeed seemed to afford her greater satisfaction and pleasure, than the intimation, that her time would be short; and her greatest fear seemed to be, that she might not be able to hold out in the exercise of becoming patience, till her change should come. On the day before she died, she asked me, whether I thought it would be wrong to pray for her speedy dismission. I observed to her, that it might perhaps be lawful thus to pray, provided it be with submission to the will of God, and a disposition to wait for his appointed time. And on my inquiring, whether she really wished to go and leave all her friends, to whom she had been so strongly and tenderly attached here? she replied; "Oh, yes; what are they all to me; or what can any of them do for me now? None of you know what I suffer; and much less can you give me any relief: Oh," said she, pointing to her breast, "I now feel the foretaste of death here." I then asked her, whether she still felt her heart fixed, trusting in her best friend, her Almighty and

blessed Saviour, from whom alone her help could come, and her mind at peace trusting in him, believing that he would be with her, as her very present help, and all-sufficient Saviour, till he would give her the dismission for which she was longing; and receive her to be with himself for ever? she answered, "Yes! yes! I have no doubt: but I am too weak to talk;" and waving her hand, she desired me to leave her.

Within a few days before her death, when very restless under a burning fever, she said to the kind friends, whose looks and actions manifested the readiest disposition to sooth and relieve her, as far as lay in their power; "Ah, I am indeed suffering much, much more than any of you can imagine: but much rather would I suffer all that I endure on this bed of sickness, than be abroad in the world, in health, sinning against my God; for I do think that I love him sincerely." In short, her submission to his will, her approbation of all his methods of dealing with her, whether afflicting or comforting; and her longing desire to be with him, in a state of complete holiness, as well as of perfect happiness, manifested in the most satisfactory manner, that she was indeed, born of the spirit; made a new creature in Christ, and graciously prepared for that eternal glory in the presence of God, to which her heart so ardently aspired. And when, at length, the *blessed hour* of her departure arrived, few perhaps ever realized more fully the precious import of those elegant, expressive lines, of the pious Watts.

Jesus can make a dying bed,
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

Oh, what grace was this! How astonishing; how admirable the change which it effects in the views and feelings of nature! How wonderfully are its power and influence displayed, in divesting life, naturally so sweet to mortals, of all its endearing charms; in disarming the horrid monster death, of its sting; and in relieving the soul from all the dread, which it once felt, in the view of a change of worlds, and in spreading the brightest glories, over the prospects of eternity! Surely the consideration of this grace, is well adapted to minister the most grateful, consoling reflections, amidst all our tender, affecting recollections, of dear departed friends, who have been the happy subjects of it; and to engage us to pray and hope, that it may in like manner, be made sufficient for us, to furnish us thoroughly for all the duties and trials of life, and to make us more than conquerors over the last enemy death, and to carry us triumphantly to glory!

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 6, 1803.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your very acceptable letter of two sheets folio, under date the 25th ult. I received through the hands of Mr. J. F. on the 2d inst. I have always found pleasure, and frequently improvement, in the perusal of your letters. Those which I have lately received from you, have been peculiarly interesting and pleasing; not only as they discover your own heart,

warmly engaged in religion, and your efforts, zealously employed for the purpose of securing the blessings of it to others; but as they furnish a great deal of information, which leaves no room to doubt, that the great cause which you and others are labouring to support and promote, is now succeeding and prospering in B. in a manner truly remarkable, and worthy of peculiar attention. Let Zion's King have all the glory of his own work; and let the hearts of his friends be encouraged, and their hands strengthened, to undertake and accomplish whatever they find, and are called to do, for the glory of his name, and the advancement of his interests, within the sphere of their influence. The account which you give of a number of the youth among the first families in your community, being awakened to the serious consideration of the concerns of their souls, and engaged in seeking an interest in the Redeemer, is truly pleasing intelligence. They are the rising hope of the church. May many of them be raised up, and prepared, as the subjects of grace, and heirs of salvation, to be ornaments of a christian profession, the defenders and supporters of the gospel, and the honored instruments of transmitting its blessings to the generations which shall succeed them. The instance, which you mention, of the young lady, educated in this city, and now at home in B. having received her first religious impressions under one of my sermons, affords me a new occasion for admiring the grace of God, which employs the agency of the most unworthy of his servants, for usefulness to those whom he is pleased to bless. If any good is done by my ministry, I surely know enough of myself, to constrain me to say, "Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but to thy name give glo-

ry, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake." The thought that my poor labours should be in any degree successful, in promoting the best, the immortal interests of my fellow sinners, is one of the most pleasing and delightful, that my heart can cherish. It is so, on account of the happiness which I feel in contributing to the happiness of others; and as the name of the Lord is manifestly and peculiarly magnified and glorified, when good is done, by such an instrumentality as mine. Let the God of all grace, and the only Saviour be exalted! and may I know and keep my place in the deepest humiliation at his feet! But whether I should allow myself to be much comforted or encouraged by this case, may in some measure depend on the event of this young lady's present serious concern. May He who has awakened it by his good spirit, by means of his word, bring it forward to the most desirable and happy issue, in that repentance which is unto life, not to be repented of; and that faith in the Redeemer, which will be to the saving of the soul; and not suffer it to prove like the morning cloud, and the early dew, soon passing away!

I feel a very high gratification, in hearing, not only by your letter, but also through others which have been received here, that my young friend Mr. P. is so favourably received at B. and that in his public services, and in his private intercourse with the people, he has conciliated general esteem, and promises so fairly to be useful in the most important of all concerns, those of religion. I was well persuaded, that as his piety, talents, and worthy character, became more and more unfolded, in the course of an increasing acquaintance, he would rise in the good opinion of the religious, and the seriously disposed. May his blessed Lord and Master in-

crease his graces and gifts, crown his labours of love among you, with abundant success, in the conversion of sinners, in the edification of believers, and in the promotion of the establishment, growth, and prosperity of your infant church! In order to his being thus honored, I trust he will be kept humble; still waiting in believing dependence upon his Lord, in whom all fulness dwells, seasonably receiving all needful supplies from him, and rendering all back to him in gratitude, praise, and cheerful, persevering obedience, and service! The provision which you have made for his support, is in my view, all circumstances considered, an expression of the liberality of the people; and to him, in his present situation, it will, I doubt not, be adequate to his necessities, and entirely satisfactory. In short, I think he has great cause for thankfulness and encouragement, on account of the many agreeable, favourable and promising circumstances attending his residence among you. May the Lord maintain and increase your comfort in each other; and multiply to you, respectively, the blessings of his love and his peace!

I thank you for the abstract which you have given me of the Constitutional Rules of your Church. I suppose they are suited to your circumstances; and to me they appear to be generally good. I am particularly pleased with the article relative to the doctrines in which the Church professes her faith. The want of something of this nature in our own Constitution, I consider as a deficiency to be regretted: particularly as I think it improper, and likely to be productive of evil, that persons who do not believe some of the fundamental, distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, should have a right to vote, in the choice of a pastor. The West-

minster Confession of Faith, as a system of doctrine, in my opinion, is conformable, in all the great points, to scripture truth. Perhaps some objections may lie against a rule of the church, requiring it to be adopted, *in toto*, as a standard by which the faith of every person must be measured, in order to admission to church privileges; and perhaps a more brief, comprehensive summary of fundamental, divine truths, might be substituted in the constitution itself, as a measure more eligible, than that of an unlimited adoption of the Westminster Confession. But the adoption of *such* a standard, more or less brief or full, I regard as a matter of importance to the purity of the church, and well adapted to ensure its stability and prosperity, on the most solid and permanent grounds.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, JULY 6, 1808.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THREE of your letters are now before me, under dates June 17th and 27th, and July 1st. All these favours, be assured, have been very welcome to me and are very thankfully acknowledged. The kind notice which you have taken in the first especially of my present situation under a bereaving dispensation of Divine Providence, which has deprived me of a multiplicity of the most desirable, and the dearest of social enjoyments and mortal comforts, and the sympathy expressed by Mrs. F. and yourself, together with the

consolatory reflections which you have suggested, have been truly grateful and soothing to me. It is a sweet alleviation of our sorrows, to know that they are tenderly shared by friends, and especially by christian friends, whom we esteem and love, and by whose prayers we may be helped to bear, and to improve them with a christian temper, to the glory of God, and our own spiritual benefit. I accept, with peculiar satisfaction, the friendly interest which you, and your worthy partner, feel in my concerns, and I will esteem it as a particular favour, to be still remembered by you in your prayers. You are no doubt mutually sensible of, and thankful for, the happiness and the many advantages which you enjoy in a connexion the most endearing that can subsist between mortals on earth, and which is peculiarly interesting to those who are heirs together of the grace of life. Let every day's continuance of these precious comforts and blessings, serve to enliven your gratitude for them, and to unite your hearts in a more fervent love to the gracious Author of them. And remembering the changing scenes of life, "lean not on earth," but let your trust, your hope, your joy, with the supreme affections of your hearts, centre in the Lord your God and Redeemer, in whom alone they can find a solid and permanent support, and an unchangeable object, every way adequate, and altogether worthy! In him may you feel yourselves daily more and more blessed; and through his grace with you, may you prove rich and increasing blessings to each other, to the dear children whom the Lord has graciously given you, and to many around you in the sphere of duty and usefulness, in which he has wisely placed you!

I cannot express to you, the satisfaction which I feel in the view which you have given me of the pleasing state of your infant church. Its beginning, though small, seems to be peculiarly promising. May its growth be rapid, and its latter end greatly increased! The progress which you have already made, in associating and organizing yourselves as a church, exceeds all the expectations which I had formed in your favour, for so early a period. Not unto yourselves, not unto yourselves, but unto the Lord, who has all hearts in his hands, and who gives to the counsels and conduct of his creatures, that direction and that issue which he pleases, let all the glory be ascribed! And still remember, "that the Lord is with you while you are with him." Wherefore, "be strong, and work" in his name and for his glory; and doubt not that "he will establish the work of your hands, and cause his work to appear among yourselves, and his glory to your children," and successors!

The Lord indeed seems to be beginning to do great things for you: particularly in disposing the hearts of some to join you, or to favour you, whose wealth and talents give them an important influence in their stations in the world. The souls of all indeed, of the meanest slave, and of the greatest potentate, are in one view equally precious, as they are equally immortal, and equally liable to everlasting misery, and equally capable of everlasting happiness, and will certainly suffer the one, or enjoy the other, to the extent of their respective powers through all the ages of eternity. But, undoubtedly when such men as Barnwell and Clay become the genuine disciples of the cross, and friends of the gospel, they are qualified, from their superior intellectual abilities and education, and from their worldly pos-

sessions and preponderating weight in society, to do more than others, in supporting and promoting the Redeemer's cause and interests in the world. I am happy indeed to hear, that you have the countenance and aid of such distinguished characters in your designs and efforts for the advancement of pure and undefiled religion, in your town and neighbourhood. May the Lord increase the number of such subjects of his grace, and champions of his cross, and more and more abundantly bless them, and make them blessings to the church and the world!

As to yourself, in respect to the difficulties which you feel in acting conformably to the obligations imposed by the new office in the church, with which you are vested; I need only remind you that in the adorable Head of the church, whom you are called to serve in that station, *all fulness dwells*, and that from this you are to draw, according to your wants, by prayer and faith; and you have only to ask, *believing*, that you may receive abundantly from him who giveth wisdom and grace liberally, without upbraiding his supplicants for their necessities, or their unworthiness.

Your promised abstract of your constitution, and your farther communications respecting your church and family, yourself, &c. &c. will be very acceptable to me. Write often and largely: but expect not measure for measure from me: as I am often, in my present solitary situation, solitary in a domestic and pastoral view, so much occupied with a variety of affairs, unavoidably demanding my attention and my cares, that I find very little leisure for corresponding with my friends. Finding it impracticable to write to you last week, as the past Lord's day was our sacramental season, I desired Mr. Palmer to write in answer to your letter of the 17th

June: and his letter, I hope you have ere this received. Assure yourself and Mrs. F. of the sincere esteem, and affectionate regard, and continued prayers of your real friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

JULY 7, 1803.

P. S. I refer you to Mr. P. for information respecting the state of things in our city, and in our church, &c.

I wish I could inform you that religion had become more lively among us. Some of our professors appear, indeed, to be a little revived; and our assemblies in church, are much more full than they were a few weeks ago, even when they were collected in one house of worship; as has been the case during Dr. H's indisposition, since Mr. C's departure for the northward.

Here and there an individual is discerned among us, inquiring the way to Zion, with the face directed thitherward. Oh! to see multitudes flying to Christ, and crowding unto his church, like the doves to their windows! Pray for us as a church: I would desire to do the same for you. May the Lord bless and keep you and yours! I. S. K.

TO REV. MR. P.

CHARLESTON, NOVEMBER 16, 180-.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE now before me, three of your favours, under dates, September 3, October 22, and November 7. When I was about sitting down to answer the first,

a letter from Dr. F. informed me, of the determination of the Independent Church, in B. to present a call to you, inviting you to become their pastor; and that you intended very soon to write to me on the subject. I then concluded to wait a little longer for your expected communication, which I accordingly, in a short time received; and before I could find leisure for acknowledging it, your last came to hand, through Mr. F.

For all these favours, I sincerely thank you. While they excite my sympathy, on account of some difficulties which you feel, they have given me much satisfaction, as they express those exercises of heart, with which all real christians are more or less acquainted, and to which all others are entire strangers; and as they give the desirable information that religion is still lively and flourishing, and apparently increasing in B. notwithstanding some unpleasant circumstances seem to threaten giving a check, or unfavourable turn to the good work which is going on among you.

The difficulties of which you complain, appear to arise from three sources; your heart, your head, and your local situation. Those connected with the heart, although they are peculiarly painful and trying, may yet be considered as at the same time adapted to minister to you, much encouragement and comfort. What indeed can be more encouraging and consoling, than to find your case so fully corresponding, with that of other disciples and followers of Christ, who have given the best evidence of their sincerity, and have been most distinguished by their spiritual experiences? What think you of the view which the great apostle Paul has given, particularly in the 7th chapter of his Epis-

tle to the Romans, of the state of his heart, as the seat of a constant warfare, between the struggling principles of corrupt nature, and ruling power of victorious grace? And if you are travelling over the same ground, and engaged in the same conflict with him, though not with equal strength and success, have you not good reason to conclude, that you are in the right way, to the everlasting rest, and glorious triumph, of the genuine followers of when grace shall complete what grace has begun, and finish that salvation from sin and sorrow, in the partial experience of which, the redeemed are even now authorized, and frequently enabled to rejoice and sing, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord."

As to your head, seeming to be sometimes, *as if it were made of block.* I suppose you do not feel more stupid, or barren of sentiment, or slow at conceiving and arranging ideas, than Bunyan did, when he felt, in preaching, *as if his head were tied up in a bag.* Yet he preached and wrote too, eminently to the edification of believers, and the salvation of sinners. If it would be any comfort to you, I might refer you to others, and particularly to one with whom I am intimately acquainted, who have been much longer than you have been, groaning under the complicated difficulties of a disordered heart, and a blockish head; and who have been often and often tempted, to think that they were out of their proper sphere, when attempting to compose sermons, or to preach the gospel; but have been still, by some secret influence, which they could not wholly withstand, constrained to persevere in the work, however arduous, and however great their insufficiency for it, of which they have been conscious. In short, those seasons, in which we feel most sensibly

and deeply, the stupidity of our heads, and the perverseness of our hearts, may be in the result, the most profitable, although at first, they may seem to be the most unpleasant and unpromising. And this will certainly be the case, if at such seasons, we are emptied of self, and brought to seek more earnestly, and to partake more largely, of that fulness, *which* dwells in Christ; who is our light and life, our wisdom and strength, our sanctification and redemption, our All in all.

In respect to your acceptance of the call presented to you by the Independent Church, I have already, as you observe, given my sentiments to Dr. F. and till I see substantial reason for altering my opinion, it must remain decidedly in favour of that measure. I would, indeed, apprehend, that your declining the acceptance of the call, would have a tendency very unfriendly to that infant church, if not injurious to the great cause of the gospel in B. So far as I have light to guide my judgment, I think the apostolic advice given with reference to another case, may be applied to you in this instance: "Let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God." But my paper is filled: and understanding that you expect to be in this city, in the course of next month; I willingly reserve what might be written, to the expected opportunity of personal conversation with you, on the several subjects, on which you wish to have communication. You have no doubt heard of Dr. H's arrival, a few weeks ago. He has resumed his public labours, and his recruited health and strength, seem to be adequate to them. Mr. A. has also returned to D.

With my best regards to Dr. and Mrs. F. &c. I am, affectionately yours,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, NOVEMBER 9, 1804.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As you have now come up to the terms of our correspondence, by favouring me with *three* letters, viz. under dates August 16, October 17, and November 3. I sit down, busy and lazy as I am, to scrawl a page or two to you, that I may with some sort of conscience, and confidence claim, in due time and succession, *three more* of your friendly and good letters, which I always read with interest, and with the lively emotions of pleasure, mingled with a little seasoning of pain, on account of the trials with which you are exercised, chiefly in regard to your infant church. But perhaps, I ought to feel as much satisfaction in what you write about these trials, as on subjects of a more agreeable and pleasing nature. For the influence and effects of them, upon your mind and conduct, seem to be on the whole, salutary and beneficial ; and perhaps, more so, than the *comforts* which are generally honored with the name of *mercies*, in contradistinction from *afflictions ;* which, however, divinely sanctified, and wisely improved, are frequently the *mercies*, for which our *warmest praise* is due. Whatever, in short, serves to bring us out of self and the world, to draw us nearer to our God and Saviour ; to engage us to place a more unreserved, humble, stedfast trust in his wisdom, power, grace, truth, and promises, and to constrain us, to cast all our care upon him ; and resign all our wants

and wishes, our plans and hopes, to his disposal, in the persuasion that he will invariably do what is right in itself, and order the event which is best for us, and for his church: this must be *mercy*, this must be *love divine*, although sometimes our eyes may be so holden, that we discern not the friendly Providence, under a frowning aspect. However, I need not occupy much of this sheet, and of my present time, in thus preaching to you; for the tenor of your communications, admonish me, that you are, by that heavenly teacher, God the Spirit, at least as well, if not much better instructed, on such subjects than I am myself. At the same time, I know, that both you and myself, have great need of further improvement in spiritual understanding, and wide scope for rich and comfortable attainments of christian experience. May we, under the teaching and discipline of the word and providence of God, accompanied by the enlightening, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, continually grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In proportion to this growth, in the spiritual life, will be our establishment, our peace, our usefulness, in the stations in which we are placed, whether these be attended with circumstances more or less comfortable or trying.

My dear Jane and myself, have shared the joys of yourself and Mrs. F. on account of the Lord's goodness and mercy to you both, in making her the living mother, of such a fine and promising daughter. May she, with your sons and their parents, be richly blessed in Him, in whom every blessing is treasured up, and through whom all our enjoyments descend from, and all our hopes must ascend to, the God of all grace. When the Son of righteousness, with a small portion of the

splendour of his beams, dispels the mists of sense, which a storm of adversity is apt to produce; your faith will then clearly see that the sickness in your family, with which you have been exercised, and the disappointment of your hopes from your crop, through the depredations of the caterpillar, and the desolating effects of the tremendous gale, with which our guilty country has been visited, are to be reckoned among your blessings, no less than your family comforts, and worldly prosperity and enjoyments. And as to your particular church, why should you not be willing that it should have the same lot with the church generally in the world: that it should be afflicted and tried, and that in circumstances which seem to be all against it, yet protected, supported, and favoured by its glorious Head and Saviour, it should live, gather strength, flourish, and triumph? Only believe; and believing, faithfully attempt your duty: then quietly leave the event with the Lord, and it will be such as will be most for his glory, and for the ultimate benefit of his friends, in their individual, and their church capacity. Should it appear to be the will of God, that Mr. P. be removed to another sphere of labour; still let it be your motto; "The Lord will provide;" and your encouragement and consolation, while endeavouring to be found with him, and waiting upon him, that he will not leave nor forsake you. At all events, persevere, while you have a beam of hope to cheer your spirits, and animate your exertions; and in the mean time, let your temper and language be, "Behold, here are we, let the Lord do to us, as seemeth good unto him."*

* 2 Sam. xv. 26

Mr. P. who just *called* upon us here in Charleston, last week, seems to be as yet undetermined, whether it will be his duty, to remain with you, or to remove to Dorchester. I hope that he will be directed by unerring wisdom, to the right conclusion. And if that conclusion could be formed within a short time, it would be desirable, as a mean of settling his own mind, and giving those churches a greater freedom and decision, in pursuing the measures suited to their circumstances and prospects.

I sincerely sympathize with the family and connexions of Mr. E. and also with your infant church, on account of their afflicting loss, sustained by his death. But let us be thankful for the consolatory hope, that he has died in the Lord; and that the Lord lives to protect, support, and bless his friends, and the church, on earth.

A visit to Beaufort, if all circumstances could be agreeably arranged, would be highly gratifying to Jane and myself: and we feel ourselves much obliged to you and Mrs. F. and other friends around you, who have so warmly expressed the desire to see us among them, and the disposition to facilitate our journey, and to make us feel so much at home in Beaufort. But after thinking and talking awhile on the subject, we could not *find freedom* to determine, in favour of this measure, for the present season; and have therefore, for some time, given up every idea of it, till a more convenient season shall seem to offer; "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." May we ever so acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, that we may find him graciously directing us, in the path of duty and peace, in the way of life everlasting!

Having no prospect of seeing Beaufort this fall or winter; it is with much pleasure, that we hear of Mrs. F. and yourself, &c. being expected in Charleston, next month. We shall be happy in *waiting upon you both; i.e.* according to the New England sense of that phrase, *at our own house;* where we hope to be favoured with as much of your company, as it will be convenient and agreeable to yourselves, to allow us.

The news of the city, &c. I suppose you receive, by the public prints, and by other correspondents than myself; to which accordingly, I refer you, and thus save myself and you, the trouble of extending this tedious scrawl. I think it may, as to quantity, be considered as nearly an equivalent, to *three folio*, and *seven and an half quarto pages*, received in the three letters from you, to which it is to serve as an answer. Thus I am in a degree relieved from an oppressive sense of obligation, for favours, which otherwise might seem to be not duly acknowledged, or fully reciprocated: and now I hope you will not think any more of altering the stipulated terms of our correspondence, viz. *three* for *one;* nor feel it a burden to fulfil a task, which is only on your part, the discharge of a reasonable duty, and which on my part, highly gratifies, at once, my friendship and indolence, neither of which has in any degree decreased, since our correspondence commenced.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO REV. MR. P.

CHARLESTON, SEPT. 17, 1805.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I received your favour of July 8th, I was disposed, and *almost resolved*, to answer it by the return of the conveyance which brought it to me. I do not now distinctly recollect the circumstances, or the considerations which prevented my good intention being carried into execution. But I suppose that they were such as appeared sufficient, to one that is *too lazy*, if not *too good natured*, to examine very strictly and severely, the reasons which are allowed to restrain him from doing the good which he would, in cases that are not supposed to be of the first importance or obligation. And as the heart of *one lazy mortal, answers to that of another*, as well as the reflecting image of a face in a glass does to its original, I suspect, that while you may be ready enough to complain of my negligence, and to make a cloak of it for covering your own, you are secretly glad that I did not write so soon as I intended; because you have in the mean time, felt yourself out of my debt, and consequently relieved from those peculiarly unpleasant sensations and reflections, which must frequently disquiet those, who have *some conscience, connected with much indolence*, and would therefore, rather forego a pleasure, than submit to the labour and trouble of repaying it. If I am wrong in thus suspecting you, you will feel yourself bound to set me right, by improving an early opportunity for sending me a

long letter, and shewing how much more forward and punctual a correspondent you are, than I take you to be.

Your detention, on board the packet, during the sabbath, on your return to Beaufort, must have been a trial to your feelings. But sometimes a suspension from our work in the season, or in the place, in which we *would* be employed, may be useful as a correction, for former remissness in it, and as a stimulus to increased fidelity, diligence and zeal in future. And whatever trial, serves to call into exercise, and so to manifest and strengthen faith, patience, submission, with other dispositions of the christian temper, is doubtless beneficial and desirable. I hope that you have been favoured with the continued enjoyment of your health, through the summer; and that, as your congregation is larger in the summer season, you have laboured with more extensive success, in your enlarged sphere of action and usefulness. If so, it may not be necessary that you should clearly see all the desirable fruits of your labours. Then perhaps, "pride might rise and swell," as if you were somewhat, and could do something. Whereas, according to the observation of a pious and worthy divine: "So much humility, so much grace have we:" and undoubtedly in the degree in which we can say from the heart, Not I, but the grace of God with me; so much better are we prepared for honor, success, and acceptance.

The information which you have given me of Col. B's christian charity, zeal, and commendable labours, in the great cause of our blessed Redeemer, serves to confirm the favourable opinion, which I had formed of him, and to increase my esteem and regards, which he

had conciliated, as a man of superior talents, and as a worthy disciple of the most honorable, and the best of Masters. I trust that he will never be ashamed of his Lord and Saviour, or of his gospel; but that he will, with his increasing knowledge and experience, more and more glory in the cross of Christ; and sure I am, that he will never repent of any worldly honors or interests which he has renounced, of any self denial which he has exercised, or any labours of love which he has performed, or christian principles, with a view to the glory of God, the best interests of his fellow men, and the final salvation, and everlasting happiness of his own soul. Oh that we had thousands more added to our churches, like minded and qualified by natural powers, by education, by rank and influence in society, and by grace to support and promote, the most important and the best of causes; the cause for which the Son of God laboured, suffered and died on earth, and for which he is continually employing all the honors and powers to which he is exalted on his mediatorial throne in heaven. But, for our consolation, it becomes us to remember, that whether the wise, the learned, the rich and the great, approve or condemn, assist or oppose, this cause will be maintained, and will prosper and triumph. Alas! that in any place where it has been at any time successful, it should ever again decline! But so it has been, among others, so it seems to be in some degree among you; and so it is, perhaps, more manifestly and lamentably among us: in consequence of human infirmity, of satanic subtlety and malice, and of the corrupting, pernicious influence of worldly things. May the Lord have mercy upon Zion, revive his work, and display his glory, in every part of

it, and hasten the time when it shall be established, and become a praise in all the earth!

With love to all friends around you, we are sincerly yours. Adieu, affectionately,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 3, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You deserve credit for your attention to, and knowledge of, the human frame, corporeal and mental. If I mistake not, for I am very ignorant respecting the *arts and mysteries* of the *medical profession*, it is the practice of the faculty, sometimes to cure one disease, by inducing, or stimulating another, not reckoned so dangerous. So you, having discovered that an *indolent habit*, is one of my *moral maladies*, that has assumed a menacing aspect, have with admirable art and skill, applied that wonderfully penetrating, and stimulating *oil of flattery*, to *another morbid principle* in my system, my *vanity:* wisely judging, that if this can be sufficiently excited, the other will be absorbed, and lost in this, and that this also may ere long, spend itself by its own natural evaporation. Let these learned observations be considered as designed, if they are not so well adapted as you might wish them, to convey an ingenious compliment to you, in return for the very genteel and handsome compliment to myself, which fills the first paragraph of your last letter to me, under date the 27th ult.

Now let me go on with the plain careless language, which best suits a dull and lazy creature, to whom invention and the labour of polishing, are exercises too burdensome and oppressive, to be long submitted to.

With you, I wish, that by some means or other, either by our own resources, or some funds of sacred and pious destination, both you and myself, could obtain abundantly larger supplies of those excellent little pamphlets, to which you refer, for charitable distribution. I think, that to many of those to whom they may be handed, they are well adapted to be useful, and in many cases, it is to be hoped, that they are productive of good effects, far surpassing their pecuniary value. In this way, as well as in many others, I persuade myself, that I would do more good, than I do, or than I well can. Some people, I believe, suppose my means to be much more ample than they are. For the worldly possessions, with which I am intrusted, I desire to be fervently thankful to a most kind and bountiful Providence; and to the glory of the giver, the great Lord of all, I would willingly improve them. With respect to provisions and accommodations of a personal and domestic nature; I do not allow myself to indulge in expenditures, which would involve the reality, or the appearance of luxury or extravagance. And yet, for a number of years past, the whole of my income, and sometimes, more, has been expended. If any of it has been employed to the purpose of doing good: that portion of it, I consider as the best improved and enjoyed; and not unto me, but unto the God of all grace, from whom cometh down every good gift, who furnishes the means, and forms the disposition for usefulness, be all the praise and glory.

While I lament with you, the truly deplorable state of religion, in and about Boston, &c. it is pleasing to find our common worthy friend, Dr. M. so nobly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, in his performance called, "True reasons;" and I have been much gratified with the perusal of four numbers of the periodical work, entitled the Panoplist, &c. in which, he no doubt takes an active, and important part, with a number of able and zealous co-adjutors. I wish this work could be extensively circulated among us. But alas! for want of an agent, qualified, and willing, and having time, &c. for obtaining subscriptions, delivering the pamphlets, and collecting the money, &c. I fear that they will be seen and read here by only a very few persons. I mean to write to Dr. M. shortly, if Providence permit; and I mean to order some more of the best small tracts, &c. on my own account, for charitable distribution; and when received, *perhaps* I may send you a few of them. You and I, as I think, if we were together, would in many cases and respects, harmonize in counsels and measures, for doing good: though perhaps, as my passions may be a little cooled by the chilling hand of time, I might not be found willing to go as far as your fervor would carry you, in combating the mistaken zeal of some people, who profess to be, and some of whom, it is to be hoped, are really serving the same great and all important cause, in which, as we hope, we ourselves are engaged. I am glad to hear that Mrs. B. has found so much satisfaction, in the "*Friendly visit to the house of mourning.*" After perusing that excellent piece, nothing that I could write, would be worthy of her attention. But the best writings, or discourses of men, and indeed, the letter of

the word of God itself, will not prove effectual to comfort those that mourn, unless accompanied by the enlightening, sanctifying, strengthening, and consoling agency of the Spirit of grace. This I doubt not our worthy friend has in some desirable degree, experienced; and she will, I trust, experience more and more of that heavenly peace, in the midst of worldly sorrows, and spiritual troubles, which God the Saviour, alone can bestow. Believing, and trusting, and hoping in him, with submission to his sovereign, holy, and blessed will, the soul finds its proper rest; which it will in vain seek and expect, in creature comforts, and worldly joys. And when our most pleasing hopes from the creature, are blasted, and all the brightest scenes of worldly joy, are overcast with clouds of the deepest darkness; still happy, unspeakably, are they, who, with the prophet, can say, "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation!"* Lord, increase our faith, that, in every hour of painful trial, this may be our real, our sweet experience.

And have you, my friend, at length, got down from the mount of comfort and triumph, into the valley of humiliation, and doubt, and fear? Very well! When you are there properly humbled, you will be more highly exalted than ever before; or at least, more comfortably established in the persuasion, and the experience, that you are nothing, and that Christ is All. A christian, always rejoicing and triumphing, free from all anxiety and apprehension, about the state of his soul, or his title to glory, has probably, either some extraordinary labours to undergo, or peculiar sufferings and trials to endure, on

* Habak. iii. 17, 18.

earth; or is probably, very near to that rest which remaineth to the people of God, in the heavenly state. Yet, it is a most desirable thing, to have our calling and election, to eternal life, made sure to our own souls. For this, let us give all diligence; and may the Lord add his blessing, which alone can give a successful and comfortable event to the means, and endeavours, which we are required to use. If I have any well founded claim, to the character of a christian, and to the hope of Heaven, I am surely one of the meanest, and most unworthy of the number of those who are so highly privileged; and if I am finally saved, it must be as through fire. Oh what a debt of gratitude shall I owe for ever, to his grace and power, and how sweet and animated will be my song of praise, to the adorable author of my being and redemption, and of all my mercies, through all the periods of a blessed and glorious immortality!!

Mrs. K. joins me in very affectionate regards to Mrs. F. and yourself, and in sincere prayers for her.

Yours, very affectionately,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, FEBRUARY 15, 1806.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The newspapers of this morning, having announced the arrival again of Bythewood, reminding me again, after having reminded me, I believe, more than once before, that I still remained in debt to you, for your long, and very good letter, under date

the 31st December, ultimo; which, however, was a considerable time on its way to me: so that, I believe, that it is not yet much more than a month since I received it. Apologies of the same tenor, if not of the same date, for my apparent negligence, I could easily offer; but even for that I have not now time; and, therefore, let it now suffice to remind you of my former proposed terms of correspondence with you; to which you, if not with the free and full consent of your mind, yet at least by your frequent practice, have testified your approbation, or your toleration.

I feel very much gratified, and I desire to be very thankful, that you took in such good part, the hints which I presumed to suggest, on a subject, on which your church and your pastor, were mutually interested. If I know my own heart, I cordially esteem and love both the parties in this case; and would most earnestly wish, that the interests and the conveniencies of both, might be so arranged and accommodated, as to be promoted, in the most perfect harmony, and to entire mutual satisfaction. What you say, by way of apology, for, and in favour of, the church, I forcibly feel; and having in like manner felt for its pastor, I now feel with peculiar satisfaction, the consoling considerations suggested in your letter, which authorize the pleasing hope, that the parties concerned, who have had occasion for bearing with each other, may soon find their respective difficulties and apprehensions removed; and their mutual services to, and comforts in, each other, much increased and happily prolonged. As I only snatch a few fugitive minutes from the studies of Saturday, for scrawling this, I cannot now do what is in my heart, if I had leisure; but I can only, at present, commend you respectively, to the instruction, direction, keeping and

blessing, of our common Lord and Saviour, friend and benefactor. May he bless you all, and make you both, present and everlasting blessings to each other!

I am often tempted to wish that I were as rich as Crœsus; as I think, that I would then relieve your church, and all my friends from all their difficulties, arising from their want of pecuniary resources. But I know *who He is*, that has the riches of heaven and earth at his disposal, and at the same time, loves his church and his people, individually, infinitely better than I do; and yet, for wise and good purposes, sometimes places them in straitened and embarrassing circumstances, and leaves them for a while, to pray and wait in faith and hope, before he gives them the desires of their hearts, or shews them, in all the desired evidences and fruits, the favour and love which he cherishes for them. He doth all things well: and all his dispensations towards your church are, as I trust, designed, and will be ultimately found, ordered and sanctified, to work most effectually for the good of those who belong to it, and who sincerely seek its good. With respect to what you say of the plan which yourself, and some of your friends have thought of, for serving the church by the purchase of lottery tickets, I can now only, in a general way, observe, that if the design of a lottery can ever be justified, or excused, it must be when the object is evidently an important good. Yet how far such a good may be attempted to be accomplished by such means, may still be questioned. It is a subject, however, on which wise and good men have differed. And what shall I venture to say, more than let him, that ventures in this business, take heed that he acknowledge God in all his ways, and that his glory be the great end at which he aims, and that he be so well

persuaded, in his own mind, as that he shall not condemn himself, for the thing which he does.

We have had in our family, since the beginning of the present year, the deeply afflicted widow of a clergyman, the Rev. J. W. of Connecticut; who, in pursuit of health, was coming on to the southward, but died on the passage from Norfolk to this city. Mr. W. appears to have been a very pious, zealous, active, and useful minister of the gospel; and Mrs. W. has exhibited the most satisfactory evidences of sincere piety, and of strong faith; as well as of the most affectionate attachment, to her late excellent husband. She supports, indeed, a truly worthy and amiable character; and as she has consented to stay with us, as one of our family, till the weather in the spring, or beginning of summer, shall promise a safe, speedy, and comfortable passage, by water, to her four young children, and other friends; we cannot but consider her company, during these few months, as a most desirable acquisition to the society of our small family.

Your cordial friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, APRIL 5, 1806.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

CAPT. L. delivered some few days ago, your favour of March 29th; for which I return you my sincere thanks; and by which I ought to be humbled, quickened and improved. If I am not thus benefitted by it, the fault will not be in your letter, but in my own

heart; which alas! under the best means of culture, is often found as hard as the beaten high way, and as unproductive, as the thorny ground. Oh! that it were more tenderly impressed, and suitably affected, by the expressions and evidences, of an higher degree of life and fervor in the hearts of my christian friends; and that it may be effectually softened and fertilized, by the dew of heavenly grace, the influences of the spirit of grace, descending upon it, in rich supplies, according to its pressing wants! As *you feel* for your dear children, I think *I have often felt* for the souls of my dear pastoral charge, over whom I am called to watch, as one that must give an account; and for whom it becomes me to cherish the most tender solicitude, that I may give up my account of my ministry among them, not with grief, but with joy. But ah! in how small a degree do my warmest feelings correspond with the unspeakable importance of the trust, committed to me: how soon are those feelings checked and cooled, if not dissipated and lost, by a thousand vanities and little objects of earth and time, which are scarcely worthy of a moments attention, or a serious thought: and when they have their greatest influence, how feeble are the exertions to which they prompt, how small the good effects which they produce! Who? Oh who, is sufficient for these things? What a consolation, that the humbled and the penitent, may in faith, come to a throne of grace, and to the God of all grace, by Jesus Christ, and hope to find mercy, and obtain grace in every time of need, and according to all their necessities! May you and I more and more feel, how empty and how poor we are; and find all our need, more and more abundantly supplied, according to the glorious riches of the grace of

God in his beloved Son, and from that fulness, which dwells in Jesus Christ our Lord!

For a week past, we have had the Rev. Mr. B. of Tennessee, in our city. A leading object of his visit, is to collect money for carrying on the benevolent design in which he has been for some time deeply engaged, of educating the children of the Indians, of the Cherokee nation, and of civilizing and evangelizing, those poor savages. On the same errand, he took Savannah on his way, where he met with very considerable success. Before he leaves us, which he expects will be in the course of next week, I hope he will be so far successful as to make it worth his while to have called upon us; though he will probably receive much less aid from us than he would have done at some seasons, and in circumstances different from the present. *The times are now hard*, from the uncertainty of the state of things in Europe, and the stagnation of the sales of cotton, &c. here; yet we have to *shew away* in all the dissipating scenes of vanity and indulgences of luxury, at an undiminished expense: while the calls of private, and public charity, are daily pressing upon us. Just before Mr. B. came among us, Dr. F. and myself, in compliance with the earnest request and recommendation of the clergy of Philadelphia, had undertaken to collect what we could for the purpose of assisting in the accomplishment of that *noble object of charity*, the *translation of the scriptures* into the languages of India; an account of which you have no doubt seen in our newspapers; and we had received several hundred dollars. Some additional contributions we might have received; but a considerable part of what we

might have expected, will now, probably, be given to Mr. B. and much good may he do with it!

I was speaking of Mr. B. and the object of his visit. He expects to leave town on Saturday for Dorchester, and on his way back to Tennessee. While in our city, he has been instant in season, and out of season, not only in receiving the free gifts of the benevolent and generous, and the forced contributions of the selfish and the stingy, but in preaching the gospel to the white and the black, the free and the bond, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the Independent Congregationalists, the Scotish Presbyterians, the *Orphan-House, congregation of all religions*, and *nothingarian principles*, the Episcopal Methodists, the Antipœdobaptists, &c. &c. &c. He appears to be a truly pious and very zealous man, and so far from *sparing himself*, he seems to be determined to *spend and be spent*, in the work and service of the Lord, and for the salvation of precious immortal souls. His preaching is on the *extempore* form, and very much in the *manner* of the *Methodists*. His delivery is *fervent* indeed, I may say, *vehement;* and though his discourses reach from an hour and ten minutes, to an hour and twenty minutes, &c. yet after a few introductory sentences, his words flow with a rapidity, far surpassing what I have ever witnessed in any public speaker, and of which they who have not heard him, might form perhaps a tolerably just idea, if they have ever seen and heard the falls of Niagara. In the course of this torrent of eloquence, many expressions occur, marked with pathos and energy, and conveying ideas highly sublime, and deeply interesting and impressive; but they pass so quickly, that the mind is left to regret, that it is not allowed more time to perceive their beauty, and feel

their force. I wish that he and our worthy, good friend, (I shall not now name him, but you know him, and I believe we both esteem him as one of the most deserving, and modest, and diffident of the young clergymen of our acquaintance,) could meet, on middle ground, and there settle their *wide differences*, about *pauses, and resting places*, in the course of a sermon. But I suppose that if Mr. B. were to attempt, to rein in his imagination, his feelings, and his utterance, he would be in danger of making a baulk, or of turning entirely out of his way; and I suppose that the greater number of those to whom he generally preaches, and among whom he appears to have been eminently useful, would not be gratified by any change in this respect, which in their view, might seem to be indicative of a declension of life and fervor! On the whole, I cannot but view him, as one of the best qualified, that I have yet met with, for sustaining the character, and fulfilling the duties of a *missionary*, in those spheres, where the labours of missionaries are chiefly employed. It is however, but a part of his time, that he employs in missionary services; for he has the charge of two Congregations, in Tennessee, bordering on the Cherokee nation: while he has been instrumental in collecting, and organizing several other churches in that country. His health has already been greatly impaired by his exertions, and exposures, insomuch, that at the age of 33, he looks like a man of 45: and if his labours, &c. are continued, as heretofore, his constitution must, ere long, sink under the pressure. But he seems to think that a man *may* do as much work in a *few* years, as he *might* do in *many*; and that if he accomplishes the work, which his Master has given him to do, it is no matter how soon he finishes it, and goes to his rest. So much for the

master : I must not now allow myself, to omit mentioning his *servant, John : a young black man, who is also a preacher ;* and who has been preaching every day, and sometimes more than once in the day, to numbers of his colour here ; among whom there are promising appearances of his doing much good. I invited him to address the black people, who usually assemble at my house, at morning prayer, and in great numbers on Sabbath mornings. He accordingly did so, yesterday, (Sunday) morning ; and as notice had been communicated, before hand, a great crowd attended ; to whom he spoke on the *subject of the wedding garment, it being Sacramental Sabbath,* in a manner, very solemn and impressive. His language was generally good, and correct ; his pronunciation scarcely marked with any peculiarity, such as might be expected, in one of his colour and station, and his voice remarkably clear, strong, and pleasant. His discourse, though not strictly methodical, or connected, was well adapted to his audience, and contained important doctrines and sentiments, delivered with earnestness and propriety. It attracted great attention, and seemed to reach the hearts of many. He makes an excellent prayer ; and sings admirably well. In short, he appears to be a very sensible, well informed, modest, pious, zealous christian ; and well qualified, to be the minister of much good, to many, and especially, to those of his own colour. He at present belongs to Mr. B. who has the highest opinion of his character, in every point of view ; and who, with the assistance of some friends, purchased him, for upwards *of five hundred dollars,* with a view of giving him shortly, his freedom. His former owner would not have parted with him, for double the above sum ; if it had not been, with this view, to his ul-

timate freedom, &c. Our amiable and dear friend, Mrs. W. who is still with us, when she saw *the multitude of black people collected*, and their *black brother* rise up for the purpose of preaching to them, *the gospel of Christ, our common Lord and Saviour*, one of the glories of which is, that it is *preached to the poor*, could not suppress the tears of sensibility and joy; and was much affected and gratified, by the whole of the services, and by all the circumstances of the occasion, so solemn and so interesting, and to *her, so new, and uncommon*. He is to address the black people again at my house tomorrow. Does not this look like "Ethiopia, stretching out her hands to God;" and welcoming the divine Messiah, the desire of all nations? "Let the whole earth be speedily filled with his glory. Amen! and Amen!"

A *church meeting*, is to take place in our new circular building, on Meeting Street, this day week, viz. Monday the 14th inst. When, I suppose, the day for opening that church, for public worship, will be appointed, of which you will receive due notice; that if convenient, Mrs. F. and yourself, may be present on that occasion.

Capt. Lawrence, intimates that Mr. P. may be expected here, by Bythewood, next trip. We have still, house and heart-room for him, and will be glad to see him, on many accounts; and I have many things to say to him, that I cannot well write, either from laziness, or want of time.

Your very sincere, and affectionate friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

N.B. For this last sheet, you are indebted to Mr. L's delay, and to a severe cold, which has kept me at home to day.

TO MRS. S. W.

CHARLESTON, JUNE 21, 1806.

THE kind, affectionate, and excellent letter of our very worthy, and amiable, and dear friend, written chiefly at sea, and from day to day, during the passage from this port to New York, was received by us from the Post office, on Monday the 16th inst. And as it conveyed some of the pious sentiments and refined feelings of your heart, and brought us the pleasing information of your safe arrival at New York, it was most welcome and acceptable to us. The pleasure which it gave us, we could not think of enjoying as exclusively our own, but have, on the principle of doing to others, as we would have them do to us, liberally shared with several of your good friends here, by allowing them the perusal of it; and they have evidently shared with us, a peculiar satisfaction, in hearing that your passage was so short, as that of only one week, and that it was on the whole so agreeable. It is hoped that they and we, unite in sincere gratitude and praise, to the merciful preserver of men, and the munificent Benefactor of his people, for the favour of his kind Providence, in conducting you safely and comfortably, to the land in the city of New York: where, considering how short is the distance between that place and Farmington, and how apparently safe and pleasant would be the means of conveyance, compared with the length of the way, the tossings and the risques through which you had already

passed, you must have felt yourself almost within sight of home.

> "While she surveys *the much lov'd spot*,
> She slights the space which lies between.
> Her past fatigues are now forgot,
> Because her journey's end is seen.
>
> Thus, when the christian pilgrim views,
> By faith his mansion in the skies,
> The sight his fainting breath renews,
> And wings his speed to reach the prize."
>
> NEWTON, 3d Book, 58th Hymn.

Since you left that "*much lov'd spot*," what changes have you seen, through what scenes have you passed, what trials have you felt, what mercies have you experienced? Surely you will ever, with an adoring mind, remember the way in which the Lord thy God hath led thee in the wilderness, through which thou hast travelled, during these memorable months of thy life, in which he has been humbling thee, and proving thee, that he might discover what was in thine heart, which required correction or improvement; see Deut. viii. and that he might give you such views of his holiness, wisdom, and grace, as were eminently adapted to try and to increase your faith and hope, your submission and patience, your love and gratitude, your peace and joy. Was not this, then, "the right way in which you should be led," the best way which could be chosen and pursued, for the benevolent purpose of "doing you good at your latter end?" Oh happy, thrice happy they, whose God is the Lord, even their God in covenant, their sun and shield, their guide and guard, their saviour and portion; giving an all sufficiency of present grace, and crowning that grace with future, immortal, inconceivable glory! And how high their privilege

and satisfaction, when they feel themselves authorized and enabled to rejoice, that the Lord *their God and Saviour reigns;* and that "their times are in his hands;" persuaded, that "he doth all things well," that "all his paths towards them, are mercy and truth," and that "all things shall work together for their good." Thus have you been privileged and blessed! And how sweet have been the humiliations, and the transports of your soul, in the view, the hope, the assurance of your being thus highly favoured of the Lord! If my soul be yet a stranger to these views and hopes, to these exercises and consolations, yet would I rather, ten thousand times rather, be experimentally acquainted with them, than be the possessor of all the kingdoms of the world, with all the glory of them. For sure I am, that none but they, whom the Lord thus condescends to honor and to bless, and whom his grace prepares and disposes to rejoice in him, as the God of their salvation, and as the Father of mercies to them, can be happy in this world, or in the world to come. But I must remember that I am not now writing a sermon, but *a letter.* To return then, to the "much lov'd spot:" to your *long desired home*, after so tedious an exile from it, and such vicissitudes of trouble and of comfort, as you have experienced, during the trying months of your absence, you were at length, as we fondly hope, graciously restored, within a few days from the last date of your interesting communications, sent on to us, immediately after your arrival in New York. The various emotions with which your own heart, and the hearts of your friends, must have been agitated, on the occasion of your meeting again; the sweet satisfactions of the interview, and the painful sorrows, all revived and

brought back in full force to the wounded, bleeding heart, by the recollection, and the feeling of the mighty void, which the awful hand of death had made in the society, and the comforts of the family, and the circle of friends, lately so full and so pleasing in enjoyment, and in prospect; the high respect, affection, and *consolation*, cherished for the memory of the departed husband, father, pastor and friend; the gratitude rising to the God of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless, for all the kindness which his providence has shewn to the bereaved; the anxious cares and apprehensions entertained for their future comfort and welfare; and the soothing humble confidence, inspired by the promises of the covenant, that the Lord will provide for, and never leave nor forsake those who trust in him: these, and such like emotions, experienced on an occasion so affecting and interesting, *we can in some degree imagine;* but *you*, we know, must have *realized them in a degree*, which even your own ready, and fertile pen, *cannot half describe*. May every pleasing and painful sensation, every pious and worthy feeling, excited and renewed, by your *return* to the scenes, *once so delightful, now so greatly changed;* and all the circumstances which have attended your meeting with your dear family and friends, be divinely sanctified to you and to them; so that your Heavenly Father may be glorified in, and by you all, through Jesus, your Redeemer, and your strength; and so that your own best, your spiritual, and immortal interests, may be eminently promoted!

We expect that as soon after your return home, as you can find sufficient leisure, you will give us some account of these matters; and tell us more about those worthy

and dear friends, concerning whom you have told us so much already; and that you will mention particularly, every one of your dear little children, and say something about them, that will be gratifying to our feelings, and encouraging to our hopes. May our blessed, and dear Lord and Saviour, who gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, take them into the arms of his mercy, press them to the bosom of his love, and bless them with his grace and salvation, and thus prepare them for his kingdom of glory; to which he has already removed their *excellent father*, and where their *amiable mother*, will in the time appointed, be admitted to join with him, and all the redeemed and the sanctified, to behold the glory of the Lord, their Saviour, to triumph in the praises of the triune God, and to partake of that fulness of joy, which is in his presence for ever!

It was indeed, painful to my feelings, to leave you on board the brig, before the other passengers had come. But you know the imperious circumstances which required my returning home. And I am now pleased with the very circumstances which then gave me pain: as the solitary hour which you spent in that unpleasant situation, furnished you with the opportunity of beginning your journal letter, and of expressing the feelings of your heart, in reflecting on the parting scene, which we find were in unison with our own, gloomy and depressed, in the prospect of the voyage before you, which in many points of view, would naturally be anticipated by you with anxiety and apprehension; and also, from the experience of our own great and deeply regretted loss, when we were thus deprived of the presence of a most valuable, and highly esteemed friend,

whose countenance, conversation, and society, were daily bringing her nearer and nearer to our hearts, from the first evening, to the last morning of her residence in our family, "which seemed unto us but a few days, for the love we had for her."* It was some consolation to find so many sharing in our love and regret, and best wishes for you. All your intimate acquaintance, seem to have become in a greater or less degree, your real friends: they felicitated us, on the pleasure and the improvement, which your company was adapted to afford; they have sympathized with us, on account of the necessary separation, when it took place; and they have rejoiced with us, for your own sake, and that of your family, &c. when they were informed of your having proceeded so far, and so comfortably, on your way homeward. Let not these observations, make your pride or vanity, "rise and swell:" but remembering who has made you to differ from, and to excel others, either in the qualifications of nature, education, or grace, be humble and thankful, and act as it becomes one who knows, that of them, to whom much has been given, the more will be required, by the great Lord of all, who distributes at his sovereign pleasure, to one servant, one talent, to another two, to another five, &c. and who will judge and recompense them, according to their neglect or improvement, of the trust reposed in them.

Your sea sickness, was, we hope, ultimately favourable to your bodily health, as all unpleasant circumstances, and painful events are, or are adapted to be, medicinal and salutary to the soul. While that

* Gen. xxix. 20.

sickness, and your distance from the ordinances of the sanctuary, prevented your enjoying much pleasure on the sabbath; it is to be hoped, that your kind christian remembrance of the church in which you had been lately a worshipper, and the pious ejaculations of your heart, which ascended to God on our behalf, and on the particular occasion of our dedicating our new house of worship to his service, were graciously accepted, and happily instrumental, through the intercession of our divine Mediator, in drawing down the blessings of heaven upon us. After being providentially detained with us, till the day preceding that sabbath, many other friends, with ourselves, very much regretted, that you were not allowed to enjoy that sabbath with us, on the first occasion of our assembling in that edifice. But so the Lord ordered it; and as he doth all things well, you and we should ever feel it, as our duty, and our interest, and our happiness, to say from the heart, the will of the Lord be done! On the solemn and interesting occasion of our opening for public worship, that new, spacious, and handsome house, which we have builded for the Lord, we encourage the hope, that his presence was with us, that his blessing was upon us, that his peace was to that house, and that in the view of a number at least, of the genuine worshippers there, it appeared to be filled with his glory. The building is estimated, to accommodate with seats, including those in the gallery, about 1400 or 1500 people; and it is supposed, that on the day on which the church was opened, there were nearly 2000 persons present; and very many, who came to the house, went away for want of room. From the circular form of the church, when filled with worshippers, the audience appears, especially from the

pulpit, to very great advantage; although the inconvenience of an echo, is felt in some parts of the building. On the occasion of opening this church, the subject of Dr. H's discourse, was "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all nations."* The subject of my discourse, was, "I will fill this house with glory."† As the church has requested copies of these discourses for the press, you may in due time, have an opportunity of seeing, and reading them in print. They are to be *harmoniously associated* in the same pamphlet, prefaced with an historical sketch of the church, and some account of its former ministers. You, I doubt not, will cordially concur, with the friends of Zion here, in the pious prayer, that this house may long stand as a monument, to the praise of God our Saviour, through whose good hand upon us, the work has been carried forward to the state, in which it is now fit for our use, at an expense of $50,000; and it cannot be completed for less than $10,000 more: and that in this house, the power and glory of Divine grace, may be richly displayed, in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of believers, through a long succession of generations. We should be gratified in hearing that the prospect for your bereaved church in Farmington, is brightening, and encouraging. When I began this sheet, I thought of resigning a large portion of it to my dear Jane, who could easily have filled it up, more agreeably perhaps, than it has been done by my tedious scrawling. But she has been rather indisposed, and suffered a good deal from a severe headache, for a few days past, and says she does not yet feel in a letter

* Isaiah lvi. 7. † Haggai ii. 7.

writing frame. She therefore begs that she may be allowed to reserve her intended communications, till we receive your promised letter from Farmington, which we now expect within a very few days. As I observed to you, while you were with us, so I have found it since you left us, that it seems as if a thousand things more should have been said to you, and by you, which were omitted while the opportunity was enjoyed. And so it is, in respect to this letter: lengthy as it is, I seem to have communicated almost nothing of what I wished to write. But after all that can be written and said, it is only *in eternity*, that the redeemed will have *time* for telling all their minds to each other, and shewing forth all the praises of the adorable Author of their being, and God of their salvation, and of all their mercies. In the mean time, let us,

> "Cheerful advance with growing strength,
> Till all shall meet in heaven at length;
> Till all before his face appear,
> And join in noblest worship there."

Pray for us, our dear friend. We endeavour to pray for you and yours, and you may rest assured, that you continue, and I believe ever will, to hold as high a place, in the esteem and affection of our hearts, as you could wish. That He who justly claims the supreme and eternal love of all our hearts, may bless you, our very dear friend, abundantly and for ever, is the sincere language of the united hearts of your truly affectionate,

J. S. AND J. KEITH.

TO——

CHARLESTON, JULY 11, 1806.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

For sometime past, I have been thinking how long it was, since I had received a letter from you. Reflecting on this subject yesterday, I began to apprehend, that I had written, or done something, that had made my friendship appear to you, in a questionable shape, or at least, deserving of some correction, which you had resolved to inflict, by maintaining this long silence; which I assure you was sensibly felt by me, and at length I became, if not really humbled, at least so much mortified, and so uneasy under it, that I had almost determined to write to you, without having previously received a line from you, and to ask, "What is the matter with you? or, Wherein have I offended?" When, lo! to day I am again favoured with a good long letter from you, dated July 5, which has cleared up my doubts, banished my apprehensions, and fully satisfied me that your heart, though it seems to have been a little moody with some of the human race, and to have had a little bickering with the world lately, has still continued to cherish sentiments of friendship, and dispositions of peace and good will, with my dear little Jane and myself. In this view, as well as in some other respects, your friendly communications, have given us both a great deal of pleasure: I am afraid to say, perhaps, *more* pleasure, than it would have given, if these crooked circumstances had not intervened; for

then you might be tempted to try the same means again, which perhaps, might not succeed as well again. For my part, what with ordinary affairs, and some important extra business, in which I have been lately engaged, and what with an old inveterate habit of indolence, and the present relaxing heat of the weather, I have fancied and persuaded myself, that I have scarcely found time or leisure, for writing to you again, since I last wrote to you, which was, I know not when. And now, when I have taken up my pen, immediately after perusing your letter, in the hope of feeling my sluggish mind usefully influenced and animated, by a sense of your kindness, still fresh upon it. I find that it is no easy task, to muster up a few ideas, to go along with the few lines, which I am scrawling. As you have studied anatomy, and the influence of the elements, &c. upon the human system, I need not here, by way of apology for myself, stay to shew, how easily the almost vertical and burning beams of the sun, at this season, may penetrate through a small mass of brains like mine; and how soon they may scorch to cinders, the small seeds, or young shoots of thought, vegetating there, or evaporate them all into smoke and clouds. So, the less I have to say for myself, the more matter I may furnish for the employment of your ingenuity, and scientific researches, and calculations, and conclusions. And perhaps, on a similar principle, if I had only philosophical and medical, and especially chemical knowledge enough, I might account for the complexion of your letter, which is rather gloomy and querulous. In *your* more capacious cerebrum, fortified, with a better pericranium, the embryos of ideas, are not so easily or so soon calcined, or dissipated; but they may have

so far felt the calorific influence of the sun, as to have been excited into a considerable fermentation, marked with strong acidities, and with loud and vehement explosions of perturbed sensibility: but, when the exciting cause is removed, this irritability, or irritation rather, of the nerves of the mind, will of course subside, and there will be a great, or a sweet calm. The sooner this important change takes place, the better. And as doctors generally, or at least, frequently, are the poorest physicians for themselves; leaving you to prescribe to me, as you may find occasion: I shall now take leave to suggest a little advice, which may be useful to you. On the first day, after receiving this, on which you shall feel your spirits agitated and raised to a feverish heat, improve the first leisure hour, which you can command, and which you have a right to demand from those engagements with the world, which your situation requires, and which your religion sanctions, for the purpose of retreating to that charming shade, created by the Redeemer's banner of love, which he spreads over his friends, who are disposed to withdraw from the world, in order to enjoy communion with him, and under which they sit with great delight: there take up the glass of faith, which you will find lying ready for your use, upon the open volume of his word of truth and grace; and placing this before your eye, out of which you have carefully cast every beam and mote, which would obstruct its vision, look steadily, through this, towards every point of the compass around you; and when you have taken a deliberate survey of the world, and of your fellow mortals, "moving like shadows o'er the plain," then raise your glass towards the throne of your Lord; and though at first you may see

only clouds and darkness round about him; yet will you soon begin to perceive light shining out of darkness; and in his light, you will see light sufficient to shew you, that he doth all things well, and that there is not a circumstance of your situation, or an event which befals you, by whatever secondary cause or agency produced, but what is ordered by infinite wisdom, and sanctified by Divine grace, to work for your good. Before you are aware, you will find, that this sweet retirement, and this interesting prospect, have cooled the fever of your mind, composed all its ruffled feelings and passions, and restored it to the enjoyment of a most desirable peace, such as the smiles of the world cannot give, nor its frowns take away; a peace which your Lord alone can bestow, and which his chosen and beloved friends, usually enjoy in the highest perfection, when they are most harassed and oppressed by the tribulations, which they experience in, and from the world. *Probatum est.*

Yes, my friend, I believe that you, and I hope that I, have often felt its sovereign salutary efficacy. But I think it probable, that you, as I know that I often stand in need of being reminded of this blessed remedy, this genuine catholicon; and of being urged by much and importunate persuasion, to try it again, especially when we are under an high worldly delirium, and are most incapable of judging what is best for us. This, I think, has brought me out of many an obstinate fit of pouting, or of the hypo, when I was not inclined to speak to any body, unless it was in pettish language, and when I wanted nobody to speak to me, unless it was in language that would flatter my pride, or encourage me in my ill humour with the world, with which I was quarrelling, be-

cause I thought it did not treat me as well as I deserved. But, when I have not taken due pains to have my eye cleared of prejudice, and self-love, which always form a foggy atmosphere, or to have the glass sufficiently brightened by the application of a leaf of Divine truth, I have been obliged to look the longer, and again and again, before I could well see, that while I was not what I ought to be, all things around me were as they should be, arranged and ordered in the best manner, to impress upon my heart the lessons of heavenly wisdom, to humble me under a consciousness of my own failings, follies, and offences; and to recommend and endear to me more effectually, the blood and righteousness, the love and grace, and friendship of the blessed Redeemer, as the sinner's best friend; and thus to do me good in the latter end. Such also, I suppose, has sometimes been your experience. From the observations, indeed, which fill a page or more of your folio letter, I suspect that many of the scenes in this path of life, which you have trodden, have been very similar to those through which I have passed, in my pilgrimage through the wilderness of this evil world. How often has it smiled and flattered, and made the fairest promises, when it has been preparing to give the vexation and bitterness of the most mortifying disappointments; but when aware of its deceitfulness, and refusing to trust to its friendship, we have taken the word and Spirit, and providence of God, for our guide and stay, we have then found the hostility of the world, made to minister to our welfare, and some of the keenest pains which it had inflicted, turned into our sweetest comforts. Let us then be cheered and encouraged, for the time to come. While we meet with so much

vanity and emptiness, in so many of the things of the world, and of our fellow mortals who dwell in it ; let us be thankful for the few good things, and worthy, and valuable, and dear friends, which we enjoy in it ; and through all its varied scenes, let us walk by faith, and not by sight, leaning on our beloved Lord, whose fulness is always ready to supply all our wants, rejoicing in worldly comforts, as though we rejoiced not, and weeping under worldly sorrows, as though we wept not ; looking not at the things which are seen and temporal, but at the things which are not seen, and eternal ; firmly believing, and humbly exulting, in the persuasion, and the prospect, that " our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory."

I do not wonder at your feelings, after reading Orton's Life of Doddridge. The perusal of that volume, made me feel so humble, and gave me such a degrading view of myself, that I often almost blushed at the thought of claiming the christian character, which shone with so much of its native beauty and lustre in Doddridge, or of raising even a trembling hope to that heavenly habitation, where his happy spirit now dwells, triumphing in grace, perfected in glory. But some time afterwards, consulting with an old near neighbour of mine, Mr. Self, who, though I know him to be far from being as good as he should be, and have been, in many instances, shamefully duped and grossly injured by him, yet some how or other, possesses a most extraordinary influence over me ; he slyly insinuated, that in this admirable picture, which Orton has drawn of his friend, we have only, or chiefly, an exhibition of his excellencies, which appear prominent and brilliant indeed,

while his defects are kept wholly out of view, and are thrown so far into the back ground, as to be scarcely visible; and he suggested further, that with such mental imbecility, as had fallen to my lot, it would be the extreme of folly, to attempt, to rival a man of such superior talents, as well of such pre-eminent piety: while he added, which I knew to be true, and which seemed to give a plausible, pleasing air of truth to all the rest, that my bodily frame, especially in this debilitating climate, would have long ago sunk into the earth, from which it was taken, under one fourth part of the labours which the pious, the benevolent, the zealous, the indefatigable Doddridge, sustained. But if this same Mr. Self, should ever come in your way, I advise you to be very cautious in your intercourse with him; for though he shews, at first, a very friendly, prepossessing countenance, and possesses an eloquent, persuasive tongue; yet, trust not to these flattering appearances, nor believe his much fair speech; for he will deceive you, and do you a mischief, where he seems to intend you a kindness. Avoid him, therefore, as much as possible, and as often as you meet him, turn immediately from him, and go, and do like Doddridge, as far as you have ability and opportunity; or, at least, nobly try to be a follower of him, as he was of Christ.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. W.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 14, 1806

"As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country;" and so grateful and refreshing to

our spirits, was the excellent letter of our highly esteemed, and very dear friend, of the 23d and 24th of July ultimo, which we received on the 11th inst. For some time past, we sent to the Post-office, as often as the northern mail arrived; but still found nothing there for us, from Farmington, but disappointment. For this, indeed, we may chiefly thank ourselves; since, if we had consulted our judgment more, and our feelings less, we could not have allowed ourselves, to indulge any very sanguine expectations of a letter from you, much sooner than we were favoured with the one above mentioned: and I am truly sorry, that an intimation, dropped by my unguarded pen, on that subject, should have given a moment's pain to your feeling heart, on account of your not being able to gratify our expectations, so soon as we and you also wished. The peculiar circumstances of your situation, after so long an absence from home, and so great and afflicting a change in your family, and your having, since your return, such a multiplicity of affairs, and the almost incessant calls of so large a circle of kind and sympathizing friends, to occupy your attention, would have formed a sufficient apology, for even a longer delay of your much desired, and much valued, communications. And even when our affectionate wishes, became almost impatient to hear from you, still would not our hearts cherish, for a moment, the thought of attaching any blame to you; for we were sure, that your heart was not in fault. No, indeed; never have we, in a single instance, been inclined to call in question, the sincerity, the affection, the good will, of your friendship for us; while we have felt and regretted our inability to make due returns for it, in all those refined satisfactions, and important benefits, which

christian love delights in conferring, and would often communicate in a measure far, very far beyond its power. In the present case, if any of us have been blameable, it must be ourselves, rather than you; as your second letter from New-York, which came, I believe, by Capt. R. and which we did not receive till some time after our letters were written to you, has not till now been mentioned. And the reason of this was, that we were then looking for another from you, and meant to take notice of both together; and thus, at the same time, to avoid unnecessary postage, and to spare some labour in writing; and you know, how agreeable to us, are all labour saving plans, and measures, in this warm, and relaxing climate. And much of this summer, has been unusually warm, though still very healthy in the city, and very favourable to the crops in the country.

Your labour in writing, in a climate much more favourable, both to bodily and mental exertion, you may consider as most agreeably compensated to you, by the pleasure, and the instruction communicated to ourselves, and some other friends, who have been favoured with the perusal of your last, as well as of your former letters. After such a remark, shall I now be allowed to intimate, that there is any thing in your last letter, I mean as to sentiment or expression, that is *not pleasing?* Perhaps, rather, I should say that *ought not to be pleasing?* For, should I be pleased with *flattery?* It was not, I am sure, *your intention to flatter.* But, ah! my friend, yielding only to the impulse of your own grateful, benevolent heart, and not sufficiently aware of the vanity and selfishness of mine, you have incautiously indulged in a language, about as well adapt-

ed to preserve and promote that humbleness of mind, which is one of the first dispositions of the christian temper, and brightest ornament of the christian character, as a lighted match would be to secure gunpowder from an explosion. Yet, on the whole, what seemed in itself, not surely so designed by you, adapted to do me some harm, may, on the contrary, be productive of much good; if it shall lead me to reflect, how fallible a criterion of our character and state, is the opinion of our fellow mortals, while prejudiced enemies, censure and condemn, without knowledge or mercy, and partial friends approve and commend, beyond all truth and reason; if it shall admonish me, to consider how much better we should be, if we were even as good as we sometimes appear to be, in the view of the kind friends, whose charity for us is such, that they can scarcely think any evil of us; and if it shall serve to remind me, how inestimable is the privilege of all real believers, who would do good, while evil is present with them; and who, on account of that evil, cannot do half the good which they would, in having a divine Redeemer, mediator, high-priest, and advocate, who is the Lord, their righteousness and strength; who can be touched with the feeling of all their infirmities, who ever liveth to make intercession for them, and who, through his own atoning blood, justifying righteousness, and infinite merits, presents their persons and services, notwithstanding all their failings and imperfections, with acceptance to the most holy, and the most gracious God. Are we united by a vital faith to this adorable Saviour; and are we complete in him, in whom all fulness dwells? Oh! how precious should he be to our souls! how deeply should we be humbled, on account of living so little by faith

in him, and in the promises of his gospel: and how much more should our souls be animated, with the fervent desire, and holy ambition, of having that mind in us, which was also in him, and of being conformed to that perfect and amiable example, which he has left us, that we should follow his steps! Lord increase my faith, that the proper fruits of it, in love to God and man, of pure, disinterested, active, beneficent love, may more abound!

And now, what were the kindnesses shewn, or the services done, to our worthy and dear friend, for which she feels and expresses so much gratitude? If we were instruments of any comfort, or benefit to you, this was altogether in consequence of the Lord's designs of mercy and love to you; who, having all hearts in his hands, inclines every one to do for his people, just what he hath purposed and determined in their favour. If, on the principles of humanity, directed and sanctified, as we would hope, by the benign spirit of the gospel, we received you, in the first instance, as an *afflicted stranger*, to whom, in all cases, compassion should be shewn; in the course of the first evening, and much more in the course of the succeeding Lord's day, and still more so the longer you remained with us, we were constrained to receive you, as one whom our Lord had honored, with the distinguishing tokens of his love and favour, and had sent to us with some special recommendations, reminding us, that whatever kindness, in the spirit of christian love, we might shew to you, he would graciously consider and accept as done to himself. In such a case, *christian sensibility* could not, for a moment, be at a loss, or hesitate, in determining what was to be done. And though christians, conscious of acting

on christian principles, may have respect, to that future recompense of reward, which their Lord has promised, for their support and encouragement in the way of well doing, without being liable to the charge of selfishness, nay, with a double regard, to the honor of their Lord; yet, in this instance, *all the little* which we did for you, in compliance with the intimations of his will, was, as far as we could desire for the present time, most agreeably repaid to us, by the satisfaction which we felt, in loving, and by love, serving one of the dear children of his family, and fellow-members with us, of the household of faith, if to that sacred society, we indeed belong; and by the pleasure and improvement, which we found in the society and conversation of one, whom divine grace had eminently qualified, and particularly in the school of affliction, to be an useful instructor and example to us. How much reason, however, have we to be ashamed of ourselves, when we think, that the season of your stay with us, passed away so rapidly, and left us so far in arrears, with respect to the payment of the debt of love, which we owed you; and so little benefitted, in respect to the improvement which we might have received from you, and from the providential dispensations, which placed you with us, during those short months, as one of our family! But what is the season, which we have ever enjoyed, or what the providence of which we have been the subjects or the witnesses, when it is passed, and when we reflect on our conduct respecting it, which will not appear, to furnish us with abundant reason for smiting on our breasts, and crying, "God be merciful to us, sinners!"

After the account, which you gave, in your first letter from home, of the state of your feelings, under the

pressure of the kindnesses of friends, and the heavy load of family cares, which you have now to bear, without having it now in your power, to resort to the advice, the sympathy, the assistance of that dear companion and friend, on whose judgment, affection, and supporting arm, you have been accustomed to lean with so much satisfaction and confidence; we might almost have expected to hear in your next, that you had become "quite sick," as we find, indeed, that you have been. We are, however, pleased to find, that your humble and firm confidence in God your Saviour, your everliving, almighty, all-sufficient, and unchanging friend, had been so happily maintained, under all your trials; and that you were so soon restored again, to a comfortable measure of health. The affecting solemnities of the scene which immediately followed, when the funeral sermon was preached, must have proved a severe trial to your faith; which, we doubt not, was found unto praise and glory. The honor done to the memory of your late worthy husband, connected with the respect shewn to yourself, in all the circumstances attending that solemn and tender occasion, while they could not fail, in some respects, to open afresh, the bleeding sorrows of your heart, must, at the same time, have served to minister also the balm of consolation, adapted to sooth the wound, until it shall be more effectually healed, by the hand of that heavenly physician, whose office it is, and in whose power alone it is, "to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort those who mourn." As soon as the sermon is printed, I hope you will remember to send us a copy of it by post, that we may, by the perusal of it, share in some degree, in the satisfaction and the improvement, with which it was

generally heard, by the very numerous and respectable assembly to which it was preached. The attendance of *more than thirty ministers*, on the occasion alluded to, was a most pleasing circumstance; and it shews, in a striking and impressive light, not only how highly the memory, of an able, faithful, and useful minister of Christ is honored, by those who were best acquainted with his worth, and the importance of his services; but how greatly your country is favoured, in having so many men of God, employed in the work of the gospel ministry, and so generally dispersed among the people, as the salt of the earth; while the spheres of their benevolent and useful labours, are so near together, that like a constellation, they shed a lustre upon each other, and contribute to make the whole number, and every individual composing it, shine more brightly, as the lights of the world. "Oh! *how good and how pleasant* it is, for *brethren*, whether *few* or *many*, to dwell together in *unity*." And oh! that the gloomy regions along the seaboard of our Southern States, might be speedily gladdened with such a sight, as your State often exhibits, in those numerous and harmonious associations, of the ministers of Christ. It would be a circumstance, adapted to give greater joy, than the joy of harvest, than all the worldly riches and luxuries of the south, can afford.

From your account of Mr. P's talents and qualifications for the work of the ministry, I cannot but wish to hear of his being, in due time, settled in the pastoral charge of so respectable, and important a branch of the church, as that at Farmington. But the great Head of the church alone knows what is best for him, and for that part of his church: and He, it may be hoped, will

give that result to present plans, wishes, and expectations, in which they will respectively have the greatest reason to rejoice, as being ordered in the best manner for all concerned.

Very pleasing indeed, is the account which you give of the lively and active piety, and benevolence, of your venerable friend, the Rev. Mr. P. at his advanced period of life. If I should ever have the pleasure of becoming acquainted with him on earth; his conversation and example, would, I hope, have some desirable influence and effect, in quickening and animating me, in my present work, and in waiting for the coming of our Lord. Should he not permit us to meet on earth; may he prepare us to meet, to dwell, and to rejoice together for ever, in his presence in heaven. Did I omit mentioning this gentleman, in my former letter? If so, I am ashamed of the omission, after all, that you had told us of him, while you were with us. But you know something of the infirmities of my memory, as well as of my head and my heart. Do now, endeavour, with your accustomed ingenuity, simplicity, and godly sincerity, to make up for me, to this worthy old disciple and servant of our common Lord, my former deficiency of friendly remembrance, &c.

From the hon. Mr. T. and Capt. R. I would most gladly receive letters, if they would take the trouble of writing to me; and I am sure that I would highly value their communications. But I am ashamed to think how, or when they would be repaid, by any return, which I could make for their favours done me, in this way. In this case, however, as well as in many others, they may be referred for satisfaction and com-

pensation, to that divine maxim, "It is more blessed to give, than to receive."

You have not said a word too much about your children. Loving the mother as we do, we cannot feel indifferent towards her children, who, we know, must be very near and dear to her heart. You have reason to be thankful that you could say so much in their favour. All their other promising qualities, and improvements, it is hoped, will in due time, be crowned by the grace of God. This, you know, is not yours to give. With a view to this, however, you may, and surely you will, continue to teach them, to pray for them, and to set before them, an instructive, engaging example. And while thus studying to bring up for the Lord, those dear children which he has given you, and which you have in baptism, already in the most solemn manner devoted to him; you may, according to his word, with humble confidence hope, that he will establish his covenant with them, as the seed of his people, and be their God, as he has been the God of their parents, and in like manner bless them, make them a blessing in this world, and prepare them for being for ever blessed with all the redeemed and the sanctified, in his presence, in the world of glory.

The last interview, for a few short days, of our friend, the Rev. Mr. J. with his family and friends, must have afforded a kind of melancholy satisfaction, to him and to them. With the event, it is hoped, he is perfectly satisfied; and his afflicted widow, I trust, will find, to her unspeakable consolation, that the Lord, is the God and husband of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless. You, no doubt, must well know how to feel for her, and to pray for her.

If you know what pleasure you would feel in seeing us at Farmington, you may judge how highly we would be gratified in seeing you there; for on that occasion, your feelings would, I am sure, be fully reciprocated by ours; excepting so far as your heart may be larger and more benevolent than ours. The prospect of seeing you in the course of next summer, our hearts would most fondly cherish: but whether we shall in this case realize our *wishes*, I am afraid to say, our *expectations*, depends entirely on His will, in whose hands are all our times; and his will be done! "Invited," as I know we are "by sincerity and love," could you really believe, that we would find it "hard work," for us to put up with your "plain way of life," as you call it! As *I* am a *Northern man*, by birth and education; and as my *wife* is in like manner an *old English woman*, we are of course both familiarized to manners, and modes of living generally, similar to those which prevail in New England. And after all that I have seen and experienced, during a residence of nearly eighteen years in Charleston, I am still inclined to think, that the best servants we can ever have, are our "*right hands, and our left;*" at least where health, habit, and climate, will allow us to employ these to the best advantage. From what you must have observed of the advantages and disadvantages connected with the numbers of that sort of servants, usually belonging to families in this country, you could, I suppose, inform your good brother, from whose letter to you, you have favoured us with a valuable extract, that if he were living in Carolina, he would find more *Canaanites in the land*, than he has hitherto been aware of, in Connecticut, or Vermont. But so it is generally ordered, in the wise

providence of God, that conveniencies and inconveniencies are blended often in remarkable proportion to each other, in most situations in this world. A large proportion of the class of people alluded to, seem to be in very close alliance and correspondence, with the enemy in our hearts, and often excite very troublesome commotions there, not easily controlled, or quelled. Yet many of them are certainly very comfortable and useful helps; at least in this climate; and many of them, I trust, are now worthy fellow-citizens with the saints, and will be happy inhabitants, with all who are redeemed out of every nation, of the heavenly Canaan. Yet, I begin to suspect, that if we should be permitted to make you a visit, we would feel ourselves rather in an awkward situation at Farmington; not from the circumstance which you allege; but from a cause entirely of a different nature. The truth is, your partiality seems to have prompted you to say, so much about our little kindnesses shewn to you, and *your own manner* of expressing your grateful, and friendly sentiments and feelings, seems to have gone so far, in conciliating for us the favourable opinion, and good will, of your friends around you, that we can now scarcely calculate on any other result, from a personal acquaintance with them, than a mortifying disappointment on their part, as they must soon perceive, that, after all they have heard of us, we are indeed very poor creatures, rather standing in need of their compassion and prayers, than having a claim to any high degree of their regards and attentions. Still, however, it might be good for us, to be thus humbled among you; although the circumstance might not be pleasing to our self-love, of which we have more than enough, in whatever else we may be deficient.

How highly would this self-love of ours, and I would hope, some better principles in our hearts, be gratified, if, instead of visiting you at Farmington, we could have you added, permanently, to the circle of our friends in Charleston! But it seems to be otherwise ordered, and I doubt not for your advantage. If infinite wisdom and love, have chosen and appointed our lot, it must be not only right in itself, but, in all respects, best for us. My dear Jane will, I expect, write to you again ere long; and to her pen I leave the *historical details*, which you might wish to receive, respecting friends, and affairs here. She has lately suffered a good deal from a pain in her ear, but is now, through mercy, better. This, I believe, she felt some times while you were with us, and you may perhaps recollect, that it used to make her feel and look *very grave;* and thus, to one of her naturally lively disposition, it seemed to have a good tendency, and desirable effect. After all, and with all her infirmities, she possesses, as you know, many valuable qualities, and is to me a dear girl, as she is a most affectionate wife, and friend; and next to her husband, I doubt whether there is any person in the world, whom she loves better than yourself. Let us be remembered, to friends, as before. Write soon again, and as often as you can; and assure yourself of the most cordial esteem, and love, of your sincere friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO HON. JOHN TREADWELL,
DEAC. NOAH PORTER,
— MARTIN BULL,
— THOMAS SMITH, and
SAMUEL RICHARDS, ESQ.

Committee of the church in the first Society of Farmington.

CHARLESTON, NOVEMBER 18, 1806.

RESPECTED GENTLEMEN, AND ESTEEMED FRIENDS,

I HAVE been honored with your very kind and highly valued letter, under date the 22d September, inclosing a vote of your church, in F. which they had been pleased to adopt and to commit to your care, for the purpose of conveying to me, "their grateful sense and acknowledgment of my friendly attentions to Mrs. W. a sister of said church, in her afflicted and mourning state, during her residence in my family."

This vote of the church, and the sentiments corresponding with the spirit of it, expressed in your letter which covered it, are truly gratifying to my feelings; while they are, at the same time, adapted deeply to humble me, under a consciousness that I am by no means entitled to such a very respectful and honorable notice of those little services, which I had attempted to render to one of the dear family of our blessed Lord, and a very worthy sister, indeed, of your church, which his wise and good providence had placed for a short time in my family. To receive a stranger, of her amiable character, and in her very afflicting circumstances, mourning under the recent and heavy loss of her best mortal friend, and earthly support, to such accommoda-

tions as our habitation could afford, and to assure her of the most cordial welcome, by such expressions of christian sympathy and love, as were within our power, was so plainly our *duty*, according to the principles and rules of the gospel, as well as the sentiments and dictates of humanity, that there was no room left for us, in this case, to hesitate for a moment, as to the part which we were called to act; and while endeavouring to fulfil the obligations of so obvious a duty, we soon found, and from day to day, more and more experienced, in Mrs. W's very agreeable and improving society, some of the most pleasing gratifications, of which an heart of genuine sensibility is capable.

I trust, my worthy friends, that I am not altogether a stranger to the influence of that most excellent, that divine sentiment or maxim, worthy of its adorable author, that "*It is better to give than to receive;*" and that I am not entirely regardless of *His* most condescending and munificent grace, "who has promised a rich and everlasting reward to those that shall give to drink to one of *his* little ones, even a cup of cold water, *in the name of a disciple.* But how often have I been led to reflect, and to say, "can *I* pretend to *this blessedness*, and claim *this reward*, when I know that a *spirit of selfishness* so greatly debases *all* the *little* that I do, which, in the eye of a partial friend, may look like christian benevolence? In the case now in view, whether the principles of my conduct were such as the spirit of Christ inspires, and his gospel enjoins and sanctions, and therefore such as will authorize the belief and hope, that according to the constitution and the provisions of the *covenant of grace*, I may safely look within for *an approving conscience*, and look up

to *an approving God*, is a question which I feel myself not competent to decide. I know, however, that in what I did, which was, I doubt not, far less than what I ought to have done, I felt a satisfaction and pleasure, which were more than an abundant equivalent, for the little which was done; and in these sentiments and feelings, those of Mrs. K. have, as I believe, fully co-incided with my own.

On this subject, indeed, one of my most intimate and highly esteemed christian friends, not very long ago, after reading one of Mrs. W's letters, observed, that if we had been permitted to form a plan for obtaining the most desirable addition to our social and domestic comforts, we could not possibly have chosen better for ourselves, than the wisdom of our gracious Lord had already chosen for us, in bringing Mrs. W. into our family, and detaining her there during the short season which she spent with us. When she left us, we felt that we were separated from a *friend*, who was among those most near and dear to our hearts, and with whom we might probably never meet again in this world; yet consoled with the hope, if that hope *we* might venture to cherish, of meeting, never to part, in a better world; where christian love and friendship are perfected, and where the joy and pleasure, resulting from this source, and that infinitely higher source, the love and favour of our God and Saviour, shall never be interrupted, but shall be ever full, and ever growing, through all the ages of a blessed and glorious immortality!

But I must check a roving pen, which never knows where to stop, when employed on a pleasing, interesting subject. Allow me only to add, on this subject, that the well meant, but too flattering expressions of

the sense, entertained by the church and their committee, of my poor and very defective labour of love, in the instance alluded to, though very grateful to my feelings, on my own account, have been still far more pleasing to me, as they have exhibited the satisfactory evidence, of the mutual esteem and regard, cherished by the church, and by Mrs. W. for each other; and particularly as they have manifested the disposition of the church, thus to honor one of their members, who was doubly related to them, in sacred and peculiarly interesting ties; and who, from the dissolution of one of those ties, which was in its nature, particularly endearing, now shares much more deeply than any other member, in the heavy affliction with which the church has been visited, by the removal of their late worthy pastor, her dear husband, and the excellent father of her now fatherless children. The *Husband of the widow*, and the *Father of the fatherless*, will, I trust, be found a most kind and faithful friend, who will never leave or forsake her, or her dear babes; so that in Him they may still have an all-sufficient portion, that will never fail them.

With respect to your bereaved church, I am much gratified in hearing, that you have the pleasing prospect of soon again enjoying the stated ministrations of the gospel, and administration of its ordinances, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. P. whose talents and piety, and respectable character, under the influence of *his* providence and grace, in *whose* hands are the hearts and the times of all men, have concurred to produce that cordial unanimity, with which he has been invited to take upon him the arduous, and awfully responsible, charge of the immortal souls, belonging to your church

and congregation. If it shall please the great Head of the church, to favour his ultimate settlement with you, in the pastoral relation, may the important connexion be crowned by His blessing, to the mutual, everlasting comfort, of pastor and people, in the day of his final, glorious appearing, to judge the world in righteousness, to punish with an everlasting destruction from his presence, those who have not known God, nor obeyed the gospel of Christ; but to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all, who have believed; and who, under the influence of their faith, and in the course of a sincere, cheerful, and persevering obedience to the gospel, have looked for the mercy of their Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

I have taken the liberty of sending to Mrs. W. under cover to Mr. R. a copy of my sermon, which was lately preached here, and which was, in a manner, extorted from me, in order to its being more extensively communicated to the public, through the press. To any friend, who may wish to have the perusal of this plain discourse, Mrs. W. will, no doubt, readily allow the use of it, for that purpose.

You see, my worthy friends, that instead of undertaking to make a respectful, formal acknowledgment of, and reply to, the very flattering vote of your church, with which they have been pleased to honor me; I have used those freedoms, in writing to their respectable committee, which I am accustomed to take in my epistolary communications to my familiar friends. This liberty will, I hope, be candidly excused; and I doubt not that you will kindly communicate, to the church, so much of the contents of this long letter, as in your judgment, you may think proper to be imparted; and that

you will do this, in the mode that may be most eligible, and acceptable.

This has been delayed, much beyond my wishes; partly on account of a more than ordinary pressure of business, especially of writing, and partly with a view to ascertain, that I might inform you, of the amount of subscriptions for Mr. W's sermons, which you are to expect from this quarter. The names of the numerous patrons of this worthy undertaking, which appear on the paper in my hands, I will endeavour to transcribe and send forward, within the course of two or three weeks. Be assured, my christian brethren, and be so good as to assure the church, which you represent, that I am with great esteem, and as I hope, in the sacred ties of the gospel of Christ, our Lord and Saviour, your and their sincere and affectionate friend, and fellow servant,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. W.

CHARLESTON, JANUARY 20, 1807.

THE last letter received from you, our very dear friend, is under the dates November 28th, and December 5th, 1806; and like all the others, with which you have favoured us, it has been read by us, and also by some other friends, with a very lively interest, and cordial pleasure, and as I would hope, not without some spiritual improvement. We have only to regret, that we are so seldom indulged, with the peculiar satisfaction, which the perusal of your letters never

fails to afford. But considering the distance of our situations, and the variety and multiplicity of our respective engagements, &c. &c. these communications cannot reasonably be expected, to be as frequent, as friendship and affection would wish. We are, I am confident, respectively, sincerely disposed to do much more, and better, in this case, as well as in many other instances, than we find ourselves able actually to perform. May it not then suffice, as a kind of general, standing apology, for those delays which occur between the receipt and the answer of a letter; that these we would not allow, if they could be well avoided?

Three weeks have now passed, since your favour, above noticed, came to hand. It had been long expected; and though not in itself short, yet it seemed to be much too soon read through, and through again. Notwithstanding, what I have hinted on the subject of apologizing, I feel as if I could not help telling you, that I have been prevented, from attempting an earlier acknowledgment of it, partly by a pressure of business, which is generally the case, in a more than usual degree, about the commencement of the year; and partly by indisposition; but for these circumstances, I should, long ere this, have undertaken to thank you, for your long and excellent letter; and to reproach you for your unkindness, in withholding it so long from us; though, I am sure, that you do not deserve a word of rebuke on this account. Friendship, however, usually expecting too much, provides for itself many disappointments; and then feels a curious kind of sweet revenge, in blaming those whom it most tenderly loves, for inflicting the pains which it suffers, from its own faults and follies.

During the long intervals, which take place between the periods of writing and receiving letters, our spirits are often with yours, participating in the remembrance of seasons past, in the feeling of present circumstances, and in realizing the prospect which the light of heaven presents to christian faith, not only through the checkered, contracted landscape of this mortal life, but into the boundless scenes of eternity, of a blessed and glorious immortality. What a privilege and satisfaction, that, though far absent in body, we may yet be present in spirit, beholding and sharing each other's state and interests, temporal, spiritual, and eternal! and that, especially, we may in the name, and through the mediation of our common Lord and Saviour, meet at the throne of grace, and there seek and obtain mercy and grace for each other, as well as for ourselves, according to our several circumstances of want, of duty, and of trial, in the course of our pilgrimage towards that rest, which remaineth for the people of God; into which no sin, or sorrow shall follow them; and in the enjoyment of which, all their capacities and desires, shall be filled with all the fulness of God! That we may meet you and others, who have been and are most dear to you, in that blessed world, to review, in the light of glory, the scenes of earth and time, of providence and grace, and to rejoice and triumph together, in the perfections, the works, and the praises, of God our Saviour for ever. Pray for us, with the peculiar tenderness and fervor of christian love; and pray for us, without ceasing.

Your description of the solemn and interesting scene of Mr. P's ordination to the gospel ministry, in order to his becoming connected, in the pastoral relation, with

the church, in which your late worthy and dear husband, for a number of years, exercised his ministry so faithfully and zealously, so honorably to himself, and so usefully to his people, and from the labours of which he has been removed to the joy of his Lord, is worthy of your heart, and of your pen; and has excited in the hearts of your friends here, emotions of sympathy, serious and tender in their nature, somewhat correspondent, though, in their degree, they may be much inferior, to your own. It is not at all surprising, that such a solemnity should have been, at once, "pleasant and mournful to your soul." By a spirit of piety and sensibility like yours, and circumstanced as you were, both the pleasant and the mournful impressions naturally produced by the occasion, must have been deeply felt indeed; while contemplating, on the one hand, the desirable privileges and hopes, to which the bereaved church was thus restored; and while, on the other hand, dwelling on the affecting recollection of past events, which had called them and you to mourn together. May the same blessed Lord and Saviour, who, when he calls home one and another of his faithful servants, that they may enter into his joy, still provide for his church a succession of pastors and teachers, be still found by you, the husband of the widow, and the father of your fatherless children, and by his gracious presence and abundant consolations, fill the great void, which his holy bereaving hand, with the wisest designs and for the most salutary purposes, has made in your affectionate heart, and in your dearest social comforts!

Vain wish! yet I cannot help wishing, that I had been present, to see what you saw, and to hear what

you heard, on that solemn and tender occasion. Such an assemblage of the worthy and pious ministers of Christ, and of devout worshippers, and engaged spectators and hearers; such serious and interesting transactions, such instructive, impressive discourses, and such excellent, affecting, elevating psalmody, as you describe, would I am sure, have afforded a very peculiar gratification to my feelings, and might, I hope, have contributed something to my spiritual improvement. So many people, thronging the courts of the Lord's house, and engaging in the exercises of his worship, with attentive minds, and so many of the cordial friends of Zion, and especially of the faithful brethren in the gospel ministry, uniting with christian love and zeal, and harmony in their efforts to promote each other's edification, and to build up the church of Christ, and advance its peace and prosperity; how pleasing, how animating the scene, to every heart which loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and which prefers the success of his cause, the triumphs of his cross, to its chiefest earthly joy! There are, I trust, many hearts here, which would rejoice in witnessing such a scene, in all its solemn delightful circumstances, if Providence should furnish the peculiar occasion; and, in beholding, on more ordinary occasions, the like evidences and fruits of brotherly love, and of the communion of churches, as well as of individual christians. But for such affectionate, profitable and sweet fellowship in the gospel, even in proportion to the smaller number of ministers and christians here, we seem, at present, rather left to sigh and pray, than to hope with any high degree of cheering anticipation. Oh, happy families, societies, and churches, and associations of ministers, with whom the God of love and peace, condescends to dwell! And

since he appears so evidently to have honored your branch of his church with the distinguishing tokens of his favour, and manifestations of his presence, especially while engaged in so eminently serious and interesting a transaction, as that of forming a connexion with a pastor, whose ministrations, may most deeply and extensively affect their spiritual and eternal concerns; with what consoling reflections, and animating hope, should you all now adopt, and sing to his praise, the words which his own spirit has indited for you! "For a small moment, have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."* May the endearing union that has now taken place between the worthy pastor and the worthy people of his charge, be long continued, with mutual affection and satisfaction, and be still, and more and more, crowned with the smiles and the blessings of the adorable and gracious Head of the church, to the glory of his own name, and to the present great benefit and comfort, and the future, everlasting joy, of all concerned! It is truly pleasing to hear of the appearances of "a solemnity on the minds of some of the dear youth among you, and of some of them having recently embraced religion." Such appearances, are, alas! rarely indeed seen among us, at present; although we have reason still to be thankful for some consoling tokens, that our Lord has not yet forsaken this part of his Zion. A few, and but a few indeed, compared with some former seasons, have, during the summer and fall past, been added to our church. We

* Isaiah, liv. 7, 8.

have reason to be humbled and to lament, that instances of this nature occur so rarely. But if He, who heareth prayer, and eminently delights to glorify himself in accomplishing his work of grace, while he honors his people, as the instruments by which he carries it on, if He gives us the heart to pray and labour for the revival of it, we may then encourage the hope, that our eyes may be permitted to see a more glorious display of his salvation; when these few scattering drops shall be increased to a plentiful shower; and when his spirit shall be poured down from on high in an abundant supply of his convincing, renewing, and saving influences. In the desirable effects of such an effusion of the spirit of grace, manifested in the revival of christians, and the awakening and conversion of sinners, we have at once the most cheering assurance, and the most pleasing glimpse, of the glory of the approaching millenial day; to which your delighted imagination has been borne forward, on wings far more rapid, than those of time, and quickened, probably, by the impulse of sacred pleasure, which you have felt, from the solemn pleasing scenes, which you have lately witnessed in Farmington. Blessed will be the eyes, which shall see, with holy delight, the long desired day, when the church shall be established, and be a praise in all the earth! But still more blessed will be the spirits of the redeemed, who shall then be in possession of the heavenly kingdom, purchased and prepared for them, where, in an unspeakably superior light, they shall behold the glory of their Lord, in all the triumphs of his cross below, and in all the fruits of the travail of his soul, on high! Shall we meet there, and soon? O transporting prospect! But may my hope prove fallacious

and delusive! Lord, search me and try me, and lead me in the way everlasting, and give me the hope which is in Christ, who is in every believer, the hope of glory!

The Lord bless you, and yours,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. B. OF B——T.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST, 1807.

SINCE I have heard of the renewed and great affliction, with which it has pleased the Lord to visit you, my worthy friend, together with your family, connexions and friends, by the death of your amiable and excellent daughter, Mrs. C. I have sincerely and tenderly felt for you, and for those who suffer with you, under this painfully bereaving stroke of your heavenly Father's hand. The feelings and the friendship which dispose me to weep with you, and with them, in your present sorrows, have induced me to attempt, in this way, at once to express my sympathy, and to shew my good will to contribute something, if it may be only as a mite, to your consolation.

But what is to be expected from my poor instrumentality, in a case, in which the best of human friends, would in themselves prove miserable comforters? All, indeed, that I could think of saying, and much more than I can now suggest, must, I am persuaded, have already and frequently occurred to your own reflections, while meditating on the perfections, the works, the ways, and the word of God, with the aid of his good spirit, enabling you to understand in part, at least,

what he has done in this instance ; although you will never fully know it, nor be able to comprehend all the wisdom and love included in this mystery of Providence, till you are brought to see and contemplate it in the light of heaven and eternity. Nor can I now hope to be the minister of instruction, or of comfort to you, except by recalling to your remembrance and attention, those things which you already know ; and by uniting my prayers with your own, and those of other friends, that you may be favoured with a still larger measure of the illuminating, sanctifying, supporting grace of the Divine Comforter ; and that the same holy hand which " has taken away the desire of your eyes with a stroke," may kindly bind up the heart that has been broken by it, and is in danger of bleeding long under it.

I am well aware that a parent, a mother alone, can fully estimate the loss which you have sustained, by the removal of a daughter, such as yours was ; while yet in the bloom of youth, and just entered upon the marriage state, and in circumstances, which, in every view, seemed to favour the fond hope, that this dear object of the tenderest affections, and source of so many satisfactions, might have been still enjoyed, through a series of happy years, with a still growing attachment and delight. From my short acquaintance with her, however, and from what I have learned, in the house of mourning myself, I think I know how to enter, in some measure, into your sorrows.

The last time of my being in company with your daughter, was, I believe, at my own house, where, a little before her return to Beaufort, she spent two or three hours of a forenoon. Mrs. K. and myself, were at that time also favoured with the company of Mrs. W.

who spent the winter with us, and of whose amiable character and exemplary piety, and great affliction from the death of her husband, a most worthy and useful minister of the gospel, you have no doubt heard, through my communications to Dr. F. To all of us, those short hours were truly pleasant, and I hope, in some degree, mutually improving. Mrs. W. who is herself an ornament of her sex, and of her christian profession, expressed herself highly pleased indeed with your lovely daughter; and we were all united in the sentiment, that there was rarely to be found, so pleasing an assemblage of the charms of youth and beauty, of a fine and well cultivated understanding, of sweetness of temper, and friendly, social dispositions, and of easy, engaging manners, all crowned by the sanctifying grace of God, which gives the highest improvement to all that is valuable in human nature, and the brightest lustre to the brightest and most amiable character. Pardon me, the freedom of these observations. They flow from the sentiments of affection and truth, in my heart, while they may suggest ideas, or recollections, at once "mournful and pleasant to your soul."

How little was it then realized, perhaps, by any of us, that all that was immortal in all this excellence, was so soon to be transferred to that blessed world, where the spirits of the redeemed are made perfect, and the work of grace is finished in glory! How affecting the thought, that this is now a solemn reality! And when your memory and imagination, sometimes more officious than friendly, shall again and again present her lovely image to your view, shall place before you, the pleasing features of her animated and expressive countenance, and shall bring back those many interesting sea-

sons of conversation, when "she opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness," and shall retrace that worthy course of conduct, in which every action was but a renewed expression of love and duty: the sweet illusion will for a moment be enjoyed, as if a real interview were again allowed. But ah! that sweet illusion vanishes before the reflections of the succeeding moment! And then the thought, Oh! the painful thought, that here you shall see her face no more, will again fill your heart with sorrow: with sorrow breaking in upon it like a flood, threatening to swallow up every rising pleasure of the memory or the fancy, and every comfort with which reason and grace had begun to supply the mighty void in "the heart, which has been made desolate within you." But when these waves and billows are thus going over you; if you would not allow yourself to sink under their overwhelming pressure, I need not tell you, for you well know, that your views must be directed, and your application be made, in faith and hope, and with prayer to your Lord and Saviour, who alone is able to relieve and help and deliver you; and who will be found as ready, as he is able, to rebuke the threatening storm, to still the raging sea, and by his word of power and mercy, to speak the tempestuous scene, the tumultuous emotions of your soul cast down, and disquieted within you, into a great and desirable calm.

At all times, indeed, but more especially in such seasons of distress, how great, how precious must you feel the privilege of being authorized and enabled, to call upon your soul to return to its rest in your Lord, your Redeemer, and your God, into whose hands you have

committed it, and to whose disposal you have surrendered your all; assured that in Him you will find a safe refuge, and a satisfying portion in the land of the living; that you will find his strength made perfect in your weakness, and his grace made sufficient for you, and that when, in the world you have tribulation or distress, he will give you peace in himself, a peace which no smiles of creatures, or comforts of a worldly nature can ever give; and which is often most fully enjoyed, when our comforts from creatures, and from the world, have sunk to the lowest ebb. And how consoling, how animating, must you feel the belief and the persuasion, that as he performeth and ordereth all things for you; so, "he doth all things well," and well for you, and will make all things work together for your good!

Although then, you are called to lament the early death of a most pleasant child, of a most desirable daughter, qualified to be a most agreeable and useful friend, in the natural and in the spiritual life; is it not enough, that the Lord your God and Saviour, still liveth and changeth not, and that in him you have an all sufficient friend; ever disposed to be touched with the feelings of all your infirmities and sorrows; to pity, support, and help you under all your trials, and most true and faithful to his own sacred and inviolable word of promise, by which he has engaged, that he will never leave you, nor forsake you?

And while reflecting upon your loss in the dear object, which he has removed, you think again and again, what she was in herself, as a creature, and as a subject of renewing grace, and what she was to you in the tenderest ties of nature, and of christian friendship, you

feel yourself led to weep again and again, and still to bedew her endeared name, with fresh tears of affectionate, tender, painful recollection; must you not at the same time, find those tears mingled and sweetened with rich and strong consolation, when you consider, that your Lord hath done it, who hath the most absolute right to do with and for his own, whatever seemeth good in his own sight, and who knew infinitely better than yourself, what was best for you and for her; and hath given you in this instance, every reason for submission and satisfaction, for acknowledging and saying, with an humble, grateful, adoring heart, "*It is well.*"

It has, I trust, been indeed well for you, that your faith should be tried in this furnace of affliction, in order to its being found, to your own greater comfort, and for the proportionably greater benefit of those who look to you for an example, unto praise, and honor, and glory, in some desirable measure now, as well as more fully and conspicuously at the appearing of Jesus Christ; while under the influence of it, and in humble imitation of, and in conformity to the faith of Abraham, the father of the faithful, you have given up, have you not? some of your favourite and dearest comforts to the Lord, without a murmuring word or thought, but saying from the heart, Father, not my will, but thine be done! And again, "The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, and still blessed be the name of the Lord!" And while by this renewed and great trial, your love, your delight, your hope, have been disengaged more and more, (have they not?) from all creatures, and more stedfastly fixed on the Creator, who is blessed for ever, and the overflowing, unfailing fountain

of blessedness, to all those whose trust is placed in him, and whose expectations are formed from him.

And to your faith thus tried, and proved, and strengthened, and increased, does it still more satisfactorily appear, that as to the dear child, the beloved daughter, whom you have resigned and given up, when your Lord and Master, came and called for her, *it is truly well with her.*

That fine, that elegant bodily form, in which so much divine skill and beneficence were displayed, has indeed by the sovereign and righteous mandate of her Lord, been consigned to the gloom of the grave, there to moulder and dissolve into the dust, out of which it was originally formed. But there it shall not remain for ever under the dominion of death; for at the last day, it shall, by his all powerful voice, be raised up again, a spiritual, immortal, incorruptible body, fashioned in beauty and vigor, like unto the glorious body of the Divine Redeemer.

And when you think of the rational, immortal spirit, by which that once lovely clay, which is again to be raised in glory, was lately animated, you must view her as highly favoured indeed, in being so early called to renounce the vanities of the world, and the pleasures of sin, even in the season when their attractions, are usually the most powerful and dangerous, for an interest in the Saviour, and the joys of Heaven, which the illuminated mind values infinitely more than all worldly good, and which alone can satisfy a soul born of God; and then, after having the honor of exhibiting, for a few short years, the power of godliness, and the beauties of religion, which alone can form a character worthy of the love of God and man, and secure a genu-

ine, solid, unfailing peace and happiness, to the soul in life and in death; must she not appear to have been still more highly privileged, in being so soon removed from a world of imperfection and sin, of temptation and conflict, to that bright world on high, where those who have been redeemed from among men, are as the angels of God, in all holy perfection; while they participate not only in their exalted happiness, but in the peculiar joy of their Lord, who has redeemed them to God by his blood, and having sanctified them into a complete conformity to his own image, in righteousness, and holiness, advances them to sit with him for ever, on his throne of glory!

Did you, or could you ever form a better and higher wish for your daughter, in those moments when you felt most sensibly, the deep, the tender interest which she had in your affections? And shall you now grieve; should you not rather rejoice, that all the best and most affectionate wishes of your heart for her, are thus accomplished, thus realized by her? If still nature must weep, because she is no more with you, surely grace must teach you to weep in this case, as though you wept not, when you thus view her as numbered with the saints in glory, who are ever with the Lord. And if still your bereaved heart must go again and again, to the grave to weep there, where all that was mortal, of what was lately so lovely and pleasing, lies deeply buried out of your sight, while musing on the brink of that gloomy mansion, look around, and learn to be thankful, that all your other mortal comforts, are not also buried there: let it then look down, and anticipate the hastening period, for the time is short, when there all your sorrows shall be buried for ever;

while there your flesh released from all its toils and sufferings, shall, as in a bed of sweet repose, rest in hope of a joyful resurrection: and then, through the dark valley let it look, with a strong faith, and lively hope, and ardent desire, to that world of glory, where God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of his beloved people, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither any more pain, for those former things are all passed away, and shall never more be known in that eternal life, which God has promised. And let the delightful prospect animate you to run, with unyielding patience, and with redoubled diligence, in the remainder of the race set before you, until in your appointed time, you finish your course with joy, and ascend in triumph, to meet again your dear Eliza; and with her and all the saints and holy angels, who surround the throne of heaven, to join in noblest acts of worship there, in the most exalted exercises of love and praise, to the King of saints, the eternal King of glory; and to feel every capacity and desire filled with that fulness of joy, which is in his presence, and with those pleasures, that are at his right hand for ever. "Oh glorious hour, Oh! blest abode!"

But having far exceeded my proposed limits, and nearly filled the paper before me, I must leave you to pursue your own reflections: only commending you to "the God of all grace, and our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in whom the Father that hath loved, hath given you everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace, with my earnest prayers, and in the pleasing persuasion, that He will, as he alone can, effectually "comfort your heart!"

Although I have written in a direct way only to yourself, yet it has not been without a view to those who mourn with you; in the hope that those whose hearts have been prepared by grace, may find that the consolations of God are not small with them; and with the solicitous desire, that the hearts of all may be thus prepared for partaking, according to their respective measure of suffering under this great affliction, of those divine consolations, which to believers are made to abound through Jesus Christ, as their sorrows have abounded.

"Now the Lord of peace himself, give you peace always, by all means! The Lord be with you all!"

With great esteem, and affectionate sympathy, I am sincerely your friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 12th, to 14th, 1807.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR favour, under dates, the 7th and 8th inst. I received yesterday by B. and as usual, I write in return, *with haste*, as well as a mind occupied with various objects of attention. But as B. sails again for Beaufort, *this afternoon*, I am unwilling to let slip the opportunity, without dropping *a few lines*; they *may turn out to be pages*, to a friend whose correspondence I highly value, and with whose sentiments and feelings, my own seem to harmonize, on the most important and interesting subjects, and in all the vicis-

sitndes of joy and sorrow, to which this mortal life is subjected.

Your letter is chiefly filled, with a truly affecting account of an event, at once afflicting and consolatory, in an uncommon degree! For the early death of such a lovely woman, and excellent christian; who that knew any thing of her worthy and amiable character, and especially that had the opportunity of enjoying much of her pleasing, improving society and conversation, can forbear to mourn, deeply and tenderly to mourn, that she no longer lives, to adorn the profession of the gospel, to gladden the respectable social circles in which she moved, and to be the joy and solace of her family, connexions, and friends! Yet who that raises the strong and stedfast eye of faith, to the bright and heavenly prospect, and beholds her happy spirit, now united to the innumerable and glorious throng of the redeemed, of the spirits of the just made perfect, in holiness and bliss, can refuse to be consoled with the consideration, that their painful loss is her great gain; that for her, it is unspeakably better to be with her Lord her Saviour and her God, than it would have been to continue in the body, in a world of imperfection, sin, temptation, and trial! Blessed be God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that christians on earth are not left to sorrow, for the dearest and the most beloved christian friends departed to heaven, as those who have no hope!

How little do friends generally, when they meet, realize the solemn idea, that this may be the last time of seeing each other's faces in the land of the living! The last time, I think, of our seeing the desirable friend, now no more with us, was at our house, where

she spent about two hours of a forenoon; and seldom indeed, if ever, have I enjoyed a more pleasant season, of that duration, with any person with whom I had not previously had the pleasure of a long and intimate acquaintance. Mrs. W. was with us at the same time: and as she was herself, an ornament of her sex, and of her christian profession, and a very good judge of the qualities, natural, acquired, and inspired, which constitute a character, most worthy of esteem and affection, she expressed herself very much pleased indeed, with Miss B. and we all united in the sentiment, that such an assemblage of youth, beauty, intelligence, sweetness of disposition, easy and engaging manners, and genuine, lively piety, is rarely to be found. Her lovely image must long live in the recollection, and her memory must be long endeared, to the hearts of her friends; and especially of those who best knew her worth, and loved her most. May the little company of the Redeemer's disciples and friends, who are travelling in the narrow way to life, and who no longer enjoy the pleasing, animating company of this desirable fellow traveller on the road, be excited to shake off sloth, and with redoubled diligence follow her, as she followed Christ, and press forward to that immortal crown, and everlasting rest, to which she has gone before them; having been peculiarly and eminently favoured, in being so early called to realize the promises, and the work of grace, fulfilled and completed in glory. And may the bereaved parent, husband, sisters, connexions, and friends, whose hearts most deeply feel the dispensation of a wise and holy Providence, which has called her so soon to heaven, and left them to mourn her loss on earth, and turned their short lived satisfactions, and

vainly anticipated joys, in this dear object of their affections, into lasting tears and sorrows, find, that the Saviour, in whom she trusted and triumphed, is better to them, than the dearest of creatures can possibly be; is a friend indeed, who will never leave them nor forsake them; and who is able effectually to comfort those who mourn, and ready to make his grace sufficient for them, and his strength perfect in their weakness; and so to bless them, even by this great affliction, that they shall know, that it is indeed good for them, that they have been thus afflicted. To his compassion, and supporting, and sanctifying grace, I commend all who are sharers in this affliction; and they will allow me, I trust, to take at least an humble part with them in their sorrows, with the desire, and in the hope, that as is their day of trial, so will their strength from him be found; that as their sorrows have abounded, their consolations also, shall by him be made to abound; and that through the teaching of his word and spirit, they may effectually learn the various lessons of heavenly wisdom, which this providence is adapted to impress most deeply upon their hearts!

On the deeply interesting subject of war, which at this period so seriously occupies the public mind, I can hardly say, whether my hopes or apprehensions, respecting it, preponderate. When I think how obviously it is the interest, in almost every point of view, of G. B. and the U. S. to maintain and cultivate peace, and harmony, and a fair and equitable commercial intercourse; it would seem, that if the governments of the two nations, are influenced by the principles of an enlightened and honest policy, they may yet meet on friendly ground; and such reparation may yet be made, for the insult lately offered to our national Inde-

pendence, sovereignty and honor, as may prevent the horrors and calamities of war. But when again I think of the unworthy returns, which, as a people, we have made to the God of our mercies, for all his distinguishing favours to our country; and particularly how ungratefully and criminally we have abused the manifold and long continued blessings of peace; I cannot but fear, that the time may be near at hand, when the Lord may proceed to visit for these things, and to avenge himself of such a nation as this, by some heavier judgments, than those which have already been abroad in our land! The scourge of war, we have certainly deserved to feel, if not by our conduct towards the government, with whom we are in danger of being involved in a quarrel, which I think we have not justly provoked; yet, at least, by our offences against the great Governor of nations, who has a right to employ what sword, or rod, he may choose, for inflicting upon us the merited chastisement for our sins. Your sincere friends,

JANE AND ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1807.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN I begin to write to you, I generally intend to write *but a little*. What becomes of my purposes, in this case, let the long scrawls which you often receive from me, testify. In one respect, indeed,

I act in tolerable conformity to my intention, as it is *but little matter* that I send you, though spread over several pages, and inveloped in a multitude of words. I have often and often wished that I had the pen, not only of a ready, but of a concise writer, so that I could save my time and paper, and the patience of my correspondents, by the happy art of saying *multum in parvo*. But such as I am you see me in my letters; and such as I have to communicate in them, you receive in my own manner. For your sake, as well as my own, I wish *I was myself*, and that I *could do*, much better. As things are, well is it for me, at least, in point of enjoying your correspondence, that you are a partial friend, and seem willing *to be pleased with trifles*, offered by a well meaning heart, *as tokens of affection*.

As with all my consciousness of my many infirmities and deficiencies, I have some vanity, which you know always loves to be flattered; I must acknowledge to you, that I have felt some gratification in reading the expressions of your approbation of the printed discourse which I sent you. I wish it had been more worthy of the cause, and of course, of your acceptance. I have long judged, that political interests and duties, as they undoubtedly come within the compass, the wide compass, of religion, which teaches us what we owe, not only to God and ourselves, but to our fellowmen, as individuals, and as members of sacred and civil society, may with propriety be introduced, as subjects worthy of attention, in our public discourses. But as they require to be managed with a peculiarly delicate hand, and should not, perhaps, be often brought forward, or very particularly discussed, excepting in

extraordinary seasons and circumstances, I have rarely indeed, allowed my unskilful hand to touch them. That what was attempted in this way, on a late occasion, which seemed naturally to lead to some observations on the critical state of our country, should have been demanded for a more extensive publication through the press, than was given from the pulpit, was altogether beyond my expectation; and to this measure of my friends, *I rather submitted, than consented.* And now I see, they are dragging a part of it again before the public, through the channel of the newspapers, the Courier. Now is not this on the whole, more humbling, than flattering? For when do you ever see a really excellent, evangelical sermon, on any of the most important subjects, involving the great, the everlasting interests of the soul and its salvation, thought worthy of being communicated to the public, in a newspaper? But enough of this sermon!

On your essay on Patriotism, I have not now time to comment. Let one remark suffice, that on this subject, my sentiments fully coincide with those which you have communicated. And be assured, that your religious sentiments and experiences, as intimated, sometimes more briefly, and sometimes more largely, in your epistolary communications, as well as in conversation, (when the opportunities for that have occurred) meet my approbation, and, without meaning to express a compliment, have led me to esteem you, among many others, better than myself; as being more experimentally, and practically acquainted, with the truth and grace of the gospel, which I profess to have believed and embraced, and which, in Providence, and by office I have been called to preach to others. Ah!

to preach not ourselves, but Christ, and him crucified, requires a degree of divine illumination and grace, of which, when I seriously think, I *see* reason enough for the deepest humiliation of soul. Happy are they who properly *feel* their own insufficiency in this case, and who *experimentally know* that their sufficiency is of *God their Saviour!*

We have lately received a long, and as usual, an excellent letter, from Mrs. W. Among other matters, she informs, that, since the edition of 2000 copies of the volume of her husband's sermons, there has been such a demand by non-subscribers, for the small balance of 200 or 300, which had not been subscribed for, that she expects the whole edition will soon go off: and with other friends regrets, that the edition had not been extended, to at least 2,500 copies. Of the numerous patrons of this publication, who subscribed, *chiefly from love to Mrs. W. and with a view to the benefit of her family;* many of the best judges of evangelical preaching among us, have expressed a cordial and warm approbation of the sermons generally: so that they seem to enjoy, in this case, *a double reward*, in *the pleasure of doing good*, and *the benefit, that has been reflected back upon themselves from the good which they designed to do to another.* Had those sermons passed under the deliberate review and polishing hand of the author who left them, I suppose, in the state in which they were first prepared for his stated course of preaching, they might have, perhaps, appeared to greater advantage in the eye of the critical reader; but I doubt whether they would have been at all more pleasing and acceptable to the pious heart.

Mrs. W. mentions in her letter, the appearance of a remarkable, and most desirable revival of religion, in the church under the care of the Rev. Mr. H. whose excellent funeral sermon on Mr. W. is inserted in the volume of his sermons: and some drops of the heavenly shower, she says, are beginning to fall upon the neighbouring churches. She observes, that Mr. H. seems to be wearing himself out by his fervent zeal and abundant labours; and speaks of his preaching lately to great acceptance, in the church at Farmington, on these words: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory."* Do our hearts indeed long to see such a day of our Lord's glory, in Charleston, and in Beaufort, and all around? If so: let us pray and labour, in our respective spheres, with becoming importunity, and diligence: then may we hope to be thus favoured, *as others are, and as we have been,* in some measure heretofore.

With this, I send under the same cover, a letter to Mrs. B. on the subject of her late distressing, yet consolatory affliction. I have endeavoured to express my good will, to minister consolation, if it were in my power; but the Lord alone, I know, *can*, and he I trust *will*, effectually comfort her heart. This letter was written a few days ago, when in daily expectation of B's arrival. Be so good as to hand it to Mrs. B. and may a blessing attend, what may be proper and seasonable in it, to herself, and to those who mourn with her. I thought that surely, I must and would conclude here: but I must yet take the other end of the page for finishing, when I have no room for another line more. You will easily perceive, that my brains

* Psalm cii. 16.

have not been much on the rack, in writing this; but my fingers are tired with holding the pen; as your patience must now be in trying to read, or to spell out, this *hasty*, yes literally hasty scrawl.

In love to yourselves, and all friends around you, your *little friend* Jane, joins with your *greater friend*,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. W.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 27, to SEPT. 10, 1807.

AGAIN we have been favoured with a long letter, from our very dear, dear friend, under date the 29th of July. It must have been more than three weeks on the way, as it was not received here till the 24th of August. It was, if not *long looked for*, at least for some time expected, not without some degree of anxiety and impatience, before it came at last. And when it came, as we knew that it came all warm from the heart of a friend, whom we highly esteem, and very affectionately love; and whose reciprocal affection gratifies our self-love, more than our pens or words can express, you may be assured, that this renewed evidence of your continued friendship, and kind remembrance, was most welcome to our hearts; as is every letter indeed, that we receive from you. This, I believe, I have in substance told you more than once already. But to those whom we love, we are apt to say the same things over and over again.

It gave us much pleasure to hear, that both of the letters which you acknowledge, and to which you have made such ample returns, had got seasonably to hand. And could you not have told us so, sooner than you did? But, all circumstances considered, we cannot think of blaming you; for we know that it is in your heart *to write when you can;* and we have only *to wish*, that in this case, and in many other instances, you and we, *could better do what we would:* although, I suppose, that we all see abundant cause for complaining of ourselves, that we are often and often, far from being willing and ready, in a proper degree, to do the good which may be within the power of our hand. What views must they have of themselves, who think that they can merit heaven itself by the goodness of their hearts, and by their good doings? Happy they, who are so poor in spirit, as to see and feel, that to them Christ is all! With what transporting pleasure will they hereafter cast their crowns of glory at his feet, and triumph in his praise, who has done all for them, who has bestowed all upon them, and whose joy will constitute their happiness for ever!

Ere this, it is hoped, that you have received payment of the bill, which you mention as having been safely conveyed in my last letter. The remarkable success which has attended the undertaking, of publishing a volume of your late dear husband's sermons, is highly gratifying to your numerous friends here, as well as to those nearer around you. It seems to be, indeed, much to be regretted, that the edition had not been extended to 2,500, instead of being limited to 2,000: as there is such good ground now for believing, that, within a reasonable space of time, the whole of

the first mentioned number might have been disposed of. But is it not probable, that in due time there may be a call for a second edition? In the mean time, there is great reason for thankfulness, that so large an edition as that which has been actually printed, has been for the most part subscribed for, and that the remainder are likely to be disposed of so soon. In this the benevolent and the pious must be disposed to rejoice, not only on account of the particular benefit resulting from this circumstance, to the widow and the fatherless; but in the view of the still greater good, so extensively diffused through the community, by the publication of so large a number of these valuable discourses. With great truth I can assure you, that I think them really excellent sermons; composed in a style of simplicity, congenial to that of the scriptures, and enriched with scripture truths, exhibited in a manner well adapted to enlighten the understanding, to impress the heart, and to promote the improvement, the comfort, and the salvation of the soul. It will, no doubt, be peculiarly grateful to the feelings of your heart, which must long cherish the most affectionate remembrance of a most worthy husband; as it has been very pleasing to me, to find, that among the very numerous subscribers to those sermons in Charleston, many persons, whom I reckon among the best judges of evangelical preaching, that are to be found here, have expressed a cordial, and warm approbation of them. Hence, although they *at first subscribed, chiefly from love to you, now* they feel a double gratification, *as they meant to serve a friend, and in doing that, have secured a still greater benefit to themselves.* When I consider these sermons as prepared generally for a stated course of preaching,

without any view to the press, and as printed from the manuscript, as it was thus left by the author, I cannot but view them, as reflecting great honor upon his memory. Had they passed under the deliberate review, and polishing hand of the writer, before they were published, they might perhaps have appeared to greater advantage in the eye of the critical reader; but I doubt whether they would have been at all more pleasing and acceptable to the pious heart.

Although we have no business with *wishing for any thing but what the Lord wills;* yet our natural affections, which want a great deal of guiding, restraining, and sanctifying grace, to set, and to keep them right every day, have been daily prompting us *to wish that we could see you where you are,* and your worthy friends with whom you are surrounded; and as we could not hope to stay long with you there, *then, to wish that you were with us here;* and that here you would abide, and feel yourself at home: so far at least, as pilgrims may be allowed to feel themselves at home, on earth. With what painful pleasure are the interesting hours which we have spent together, now recollected, often and often, in the course of every day that passes! With what heartfelt pleasure would they be renewed, if the wise and good providence of our God, would permit! Now what is this but *the very spirit of selfishness in us?* For our judgement tells us, that it is much better, all circumstances considered, for you now, to be where you are. How strange, how inconsistent, (but what inconsistencies cannot the human heart reconcile?) that we should really wish you an evil, *an acknowledged evil,* while we persuade ourselves that we are cherishing for you, *the tenderest affection, of*

the purest friendship! Well is it for you, that your *blessed Lord and Saviour loves you infinitely better than we do,* and orders, and does every thing concerning you, and for you, *just as he does, because he loves you!* Since then *He sees it best,* that we should not now enjoy the pleasure, and the improvement to be found in your society and conversation; we desire *to bow to his wise disposal,* and to be thankful for the satisfaction, which he allows us, of still numbering you among the very dearest of our friends; of maintaining a constant correspondence with you by letters; and of hearing so frequently, and so particularly, of the many, the new, and fresh evidences and fruits of the loving kindness, and tender mercy of the Lord, with which you are favoured, under all the trials, which his wisdom has appointed to you. The Lord appears indeed, to be dealing with you, as he does with those whom he loves, with a peculiar affection. Having adopted you into his family, and given you an interest in all the high and distinguishing privileges of the children of God, he added to the rich blessings of his grace, one of the most precious and desirable favours of his providence, when he gave you, for the friend of your bosom, the most intimate companion of your soul, one who was a fellow heir with you of the grace of life, and eminently qualified to be your counsellor and comforter, to share, and to relieve you of, at least half, the load of all your troubles, and to participate and to double all your joys, on the journey to that everlasting rest, which remains for the people of God. You were highly pleased, and happy, very happy, with this gift of your Father's love: and unconscious of your error, and even inattentive, perhaps, to *the*

wide difference between gratitude and idolatry, you were gradually raising the worthy, the beloved partner of your joys and sorrows, too near the place in your heart, which you had consecrated to the Creator, and which he alone is entitled and qualified to fill. The creature whom your erring affections were prone to idolize, your Father loved unspeakably better than you could; and having accomplished in him the work of his grace, and enabled him to finish with acceptable fidelity, the work which was given him to do, he was in great mercy, received to glory. For you, it was necessary that you should be further purified in the furnace of affliction; that thus your affections might be refined, and prepared to be filled more entirely with the fulness of God, and that thus you might be fitted to exhibit a brighter example of the christian temper and character, and to enjoy in an higher degree, the peace which the Saviour bestows; but which the world, which creatures, cannot give. You were *therefore afflicted, severely afflicted;* and your faith, much more precious than gold which perisheth, having been tried as by fire, has been found unto praise, has appeared to the praise of its Divine Author, to your own increased comfort, and to the proportionably greater benefit of others, who have looked to you for an example; and your soul, deeply humbled, and submissively accepting correction, as justly and mercifully inflicted, for its idolatrous attachment to the creature, has felt itself compelled by an happy necessity, and constrained by a sweet influence of grace, to return to its rest in the Lord, and to trust and hope, and rejoice in a manner more worthy of your christian character, in Him, as your refuge and your portion in the land of the living,

And ever since he has thus afflicted you for your good, he appears to have been renewing to you, in various ways, the tokens of his favour and love, and indeed, to have been continually rejoicing over you, in doing you good, by the kindest dispensations of his providence. *Trials*, indeed, and these neither few nor small, *are necessarily connected with your present situation;* and trials of one kind or other, christians must have in every condition on earth; *and these are in some respects, greater mercies and blessings, than the dearest comforts of life.* But *your trials are sweetened with so many comforts*, with so many pleasant fruits of your Father's love and beneficence, whether coming more immediately from his own kind hand, or conveyed to you by the instrumentality of friends, whose hearts he has prepared and inclined to shew you kindness, that you must feel yourself laid under the most pleasing obligations to acknowledge, "that he hath been daily putting a new song in your mouth, even praise to your God;" and that when you would declare, and speak of the many wonderful works, which the Lord your God has done, and of his thoughts of mercy and peace towards you, you find that they cannot be reckoned up in order, that they are more than can be numbered.* And what gives to all the benefits of his hand, with which he is daily loading you, their highest value and relish, is the persuasion, the assurance, inspired by his Spirit, and sanctioned by his word, that these are only the provisions of his tender care and love, to support and cheer you on the way to your Father's house, eternal in heaven, where your incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance of glory and joy, is reserved

* Psalm xl.

for you. *How pleasing*, (and might it not be equally *improving?*) *again to meet and talk over these things;* to repeat, once and again, many of the things which were said, during the months which you spent with us; and to say much more of what might then have been said; but for which there did not seem to be sufficient time; or for which the opportunity was lost, by negligence, or an excessive attention to a variety of matters of little comparative importance, and then reciprocate our observations and reflections, upon the interesting scenes and events, which have passed since the unwelcome hour of our separation occurred! Whether *such a meeting*, such a gratification of the heart, such a *feast of the soul*, will ever be permitted to us on earth, *rests with Him, in whose hands are all our times.* Shall we then, (to renew the question on which you say you so often mused, while with us,) *shall we all meet in Heaven?* There, I believe, *you* will in due time meet a beloved, lamented husband, and all the other redeemed, sanctified, and perfected spirits, who surround the throne of God and the Lamb, to spend a blessed immortality, in adoration and praise, love and joy. But shall *I* ever *meet you, and the rest of that glorious and happy throng*, in that bright world, that blessed abode, where

> No vain discourse shall fill our tongue,
> Nor trifles vex our ear:
> Infinite grace shall be our song,
> And God rejoice to hear!

This is a question, which has ten thousand times, thrilled through and through my heart, and excited a conflict of hope and fear, of joy and pain, which no words can describe. I have thought, perhaps I have

only presumed, that whereas I was blind, I have been divinely enlightened, to see, to love, to embrace, to trust, and to rejoice in God the Saviour, as all my desire, hope, salvation, and happiness ; and I often think, perhaps I only fancy, that my soul would find the highest delight which it craves, and to which it aspires, in glorifying and enjoying my God and Saviour, in the company, and in harmony with his saints, for ever. But, if *I indeed love Him, and desire to be with him*, why do I not *better keep his commandments?* Why do I not study more to glorify him, by bringing forth more of the fruits of the Spirit? And why am I not more ready and resolved to deny myself, and take up the cross daily, and to follow my Lord fully, in the hope and prospect of the final accomplishment of his gracious promise, that where he is, there shall his servants and friends be also, ever with the Lord?

'Tis a point I long to know ;
Oft it causes anxious thoughts,
Do I love the Lord or no ;
Am I his, or am I not ?

Lord decide the doubtful case !
Thou who art thy people's sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If indeed it be begun !

The account which you have communicated, of the remarkable and most desirable revival of religion, which has lately appeared in Mr. H's congregation, especially, is most pleasing and welcome. May that glorious work of the Lord, be greatly increased, long continued, and widely extended ! The zeal and activity with which Mr. H. is engaged in this work, are such as might be expected by those, otherwise unacquainted with his character, who have read his excellent funeral

discourse, on the death of Mr. W. included in the volume of Mr. W's sermons; a discourse which has been very much approved and admired by many here. In a nobler and better cause, he could not spend and be spent; but I hope that he may not too soon wear himself out, by the abundance of his labours. It is pleasing also to hear, that even a few drops of the plentiful, heavenly shower, are falling upon the church in Farmington, as well as others in the neighbourhood. I hope that the ministrations of your worthy young pastor, will be honored and encouraged, by an increasing blessing attending them, and crowning them with success, in promoting the salvation of sinners, and the edification of believers; among whom, of this latter class, within the bounds of his pastoral charge, you must feel a peculiar satisfaction, in numbering many, as the seals of your late dear husband's faithful and laborious ministry. Oh! that *here also*, we might soon see the happy day, when "The Lord shall build up Zion, and appear in his glory among us!" He appears, indeed, from time to time, to be adding one and another, some white, some black, to the church, among those who shall be saved. But while we bless his name for the day of small things, there are, I hope, a number of his friends here, who long to see his houses of worship among us, and the church which he has planted, and supported here, and for which, in various ways, he has done great things, filled more visibly with his glory, and with converts in numbers, in the beauties of holiness, and in sweetness and usefulness of influence, like the drops of morning dew! What "sight upon earth is so fair" as that of numbers crowding the temple gates of the Lord, as humble, devout worshippers, and impor-

tunate seekers of salvation; and through the gates of the church on earth, pressing into the kingdom of heaven? Greater, surely, than the joy of harvest, must be the joy of the friends of Jesus, when they thus see the gathering of the people unto him; in their measure, they will feel even the satisfaction which he enjoys, when he thus sees of the travail of his soul. May He multiply the people, thus made willing in the day of his power, to become the subjects of his grace, and the supporters of his cause, and increase this joy abundantly, through all the churches, and among all the nations!

But I must check my roving pen, which never knows where to stop, when moving towards a dear friend. Well, let it still go on; but under the direction of another hand, by which I hope, it will be employed, to fill the remainder of this sheet, more agreeably than it would by my own.

I am, very affectionately, yours,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. W.

CHARLESTON, APRIL 19, 1809.

It cannot be necessary to remind you, our dear friend, that in my little wife and myself, you have very dilatory correspondents, and indeed very poor creatures, as friends. If our friendship, indeed, were to be estimated by our affectionate esteem and remembrance of you, and by our benevolent wishes for your happiness, we might perhaps stand the test tolerably well: but if, like a christian profession, it is to be judged by its substantial fruits, it would, in this view, be found

greatly wanting. And when we measure the friendship which we profess to cherish for our blessed Lord and Saviour, to whom we are bound by every obligation, by the standard which he has fixed for the proof of it, where he says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." What confidence or hope towards him could we have, if he were not indeed, *the friend of sinners?* How high the satisfaction of saying, with truth, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee!" And how great the consolation, resulting from the declarations of his own word, that if any who love him in sincerity, fail or offend, (and how many, alas! are the failings and offences, with which their consciences must charge them?) they have in him an *High-Priest*, who is tenderly touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and whose blood cleanseth from all sin and unrighteousness, and an *Advocate*, whose intercession in their behalf, with the Father of mercies, shall prevail to obtain for them, pardoning mercy, and sanctifying, supporting, and comforting grace, according to their necessities!

You, I believe, have long loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and the longer you have known Him and yourself, the more, I doubt not, you have seen and felt, that He is just such a Saviour and friend as you absolutely need; a Saviour and friend all-sufficient, and as condescending as he is glorious, as ready, mercifully to forgive you, and graciously to receive you again, as you have been prone to err, and to abuse his goodness and indulgence. *Such love and grace* could be expected to be shewn only by him, *who died for his enemies*, for his own creatures, when they were in the full career of their mad rebellion against him. And

surely, eternity will be short enough to utter all his praise! What a pity that so little of it should be shewn forth now, by any who venture to hope that they are redeemed by him, to be a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works!

As to myself, I feel, that with respect to Him, whom I call my Lord, and who, I know, can alone be my Saviour, I am living "at a poor dying rate," indeed. Lord increase my faith, that faith which works by love, overcomes the world, and brings forth abundantly of those fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God!

In respect to the natural life, and the circumstances of my situation in the world, no material change has lately taken place, except what may be included in the silent flight of time, which has brought me, by the space of many months, nearer to an unwasting eternity, than I was when we were with you last summer, and favoured with the interview which had been so much desired, which was so pleasing in the enjoyment, and yet but half enjoyed, on account of its being of so short continuance, and so soon past and gone, probably not to be renewed again on earth. May it be renewed in very different, in unspeakably better circumstances in Heaven; there to be perpetuated, through all the periods of a blessed and glorious immortality, where the pain of separation, where the sigh which rises, and the tear which falls, at the thought of a departed, or an absent friend, shall be known no more; where love, and friendship, and society, shall be perfected; where God shall be all in all, and joy in his presence, shall be full and still growing, and rising higher and higher, for ever! Can such a felicity belong to me? May my hopes as-

pire so high? Is Jesus precious to me as he is to them who truly believe? With every such soul, it is surely not presumptuous, but a duty, and a becoming expression of gratitude, to hope to enter into *his joy*, and to behold and to partake of *his glory*; for such is *his will*, and such the assurance of his faithful word. Lord, I would believe: help thou my unbelief! and enable me, to give all requisite diligence, in order to the attainment of a full assurance of hope!

The winter here, after a most delightful autumn, which was prolonged till near Christmas, was, for several weeks, rather wet and unpleasant, but not very cold. From the latter part of February to the present time, the weather has been as dry, as it was before rainy; and excepting a few days, it has been cool for the season; and lately we have had a smart frost; which, in the upper country, has been so severe as to kill a great deal of the wheat, which was, as I suppose, just beginning to shoot into the ear. Long before this, I presume you have been relieved from the pinching cold, and many inconveniencies attending it, of which you complained, when writing to us, in January and February. May the return of the spring and summer, so peculiarly desirable in your climate, be attended with the smiles of Heaven, on your temporal and spiritual concerns! I have seen some alarming accounts of the fever, with which you were so extensively and deeply afflicted in Farmington last year, having appeared and proved very fatal, in some families in Hartford. It must be an awful scourge where it prevails. May the Lord in his mercy arrest its progress; or accompany it with his sanctifying blessing, to those who are called to suffer under it!

Together with yourself, and near connexions, we have often and often recollected, with peculiar satisfaction, the many valuable and dear friends, with which you are surrounded, and with which we had the pleasure of becoming a little acquainted, during our short visit. Assure them, as you have opportunity, of our very grateful and affectionate remembrance. The names of individuals I am afraid to begin to mention, as they are so many: and some might be undesignedly omitted. I always think of them as forming, not merely a numerous, well instructed, orderly, respectable church and congregation; but as members of one family, who, experimentally, know how good and pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity.

As a society they are, in my view, highly privileged in having among them so large a proportion of the truly honorable, and worthy, and good; qualified, by their intelligence and their principles, to serve the cause and to recommend the religion of the gospel. And here, you may be sure, I do not forget, or leave out of view, those serious, pious, and excellent young ladies, whose cultivated minds, amiable dispositions, and pleasing manners, soon constrained us to esteem and love them, while by their very polite and friendly attentions to us, we felt ourselves peculiarly honored and gratified. May the Lord bless them, and make them blessings, indeed, to their families and connexions, and to the church of Christ, as worthy and ornamental members of it! The union between your worthy pastor and his dear H. is, we trust, by the blessing of heaven, made a source of rich and growing happiness to themselves; and it is our prayer and hope, that he, in his special and highly important and interesting relation to the church; and

that she, in her sphere, as his nearest connexion and most endeared friend, and affectionate helper, in the spiritual as well as in the natural life, may be the honored instruments of diffusing much good and happiness, among their friends, and through the community, as far as their activity and influence can be extended!

It is very pleasing to us to hear, that *our venerable friend, Mr. P.* continues, at his advanced age, to enjoy a comfortable state of health; while with the decline of the outward man, his inward man seems to be renewed day by day, and his heart to become more and more warmed with the love of God and man, and his soul thus advancing in its preparation and meetness for the blessed society of the spirits of the just made perfect. His friendship for you has, no doubt, had its influence in leading him to think and speak more highly of us, than he ought to think or speak. I should, doubtless, be very much *mortified*, if not *humbled*, at the thought, that nobody should think or speak favourably of me; and yet I cannot help feeling ashamed of myself, when honored with any expressions or testimonies of the friendly regards of the wise, the worthy, and the good; conscious how little I deserve their favour. Never was there a son of fallen Adam, who had more reason than I have to say, continually, and with respect to every movement of my heart, and action of my life, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" We hope that the health of your excellent old friend, the honorable and the good Lieut. Governor T. is still continued, that together with his family, he finds all the Lord's dispensations, whether comfortable or afflicting, to be paths of mercy and truth; and that he will yet be spared to do much good in church and state on earth, before he is called to en-

ter into his rest in heaven. But contrary to my plan, I am beginning to particularize, in speaking of friends around you; and am tempted now to name your good deacons, and the several families of C. M. R. C. &c. &c. &c. but I must stop here, with the request, that our united love and best wishes, may be presented to them all and every one, as if they were severally named, including especially your sisters and brothers, and their and your dear children. As to *yourself*, rest assured, that *we continue to love you as dearly and sincerely as ever;* and while we tenderly sympathize with you under the renewed deaths, sicknesses, and various afflictions, in which you are from time to time called to bear your part of sufferings, we are at the same time consoled with the persuasion, that all are appointed and ordered in love, and will be sanctified to the furtherance of your salvation, and the increase of your everlasting happiness. And surely you can have no cause to complain, if it pleases your wise and gracious Lord, in the furnace of affliction, to brighten your future crown of glory.

* * * *

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. W.

ON THE DEATH OF HER SON.

NEW YORK, JULY 9, 1808.

Your kind letter, our very dear friend, which you wrote at Middleton, under date of the 4th inst. we have just now received. How little did we apprehend,

after having received and read so many letters from you, communicating so much pleasure and satisfaction, that your next would be the messenger of such sorrowful tidings, and penetrate our hearts with pain, instead of filling them with joy! But alas! what are the most flattering worldly prospects, and the most pleasing calculations founded upon them! The storm of affliction had beaten heavily upon you, and laid your best earthly support, and dearest mortal comfort in the dust. Your sky, however, seemed to be clearing up, and the sun of prosperity had begun again to shine upon you. But the black cloud has again gathered around you, and drawn you again into the house of mourning; and to the feelings of nature, and especially to the tender sensibilities of a widowed mother's heart: how gloomy now the scene, where you are watering, with unavailing tears, the lovely plant which you were cultivating with the most affectionate christian care, and which in the morning was flourishing and growing, as one of your favourite, rising hopes; but which, before the evening, was cut down and withered, under the irresistible stroke of death! How sudden the event, how affecting the change! But the hand, Oh Lord, was thine! A consideration sufficient to silence at once every murmur, and to bow the soul into adoring submission. For the Lord doth all things well, and all that he does, concerning you, will, I doubt not, work for your good. Only be now still, and know that he is God: and hereafter, you shall know what he has done, and why he has done so, to your unspeakable consolation and joy, and to his everlasting praise; when in the light of heaven and eternity, all that is now obscure, in the dispensations of his providence, in this twilight scene shall

exhibit the strokes of his wisdom, and the benignity and munificence of his love, in full meridian splendour. There and then you will see and know, and feel, in a manner and degree far, far exceeding your present capacity, that God is Love, and that this God, your Saviour, will be your God and portion, and your exceeding great reward for ever! In these views, and in this persuasion, surely you will weep under this renewed sorrow, as though you wept not. Fain would I be the minister of comfort to you. But I feel my own insufficiency, and therefore commend you to the God of all grace and comfort, our compassionate Lord and Saviour, who by his word and spirit comforts them that mourn, and binds up, cheers and heals, the hearts of his dear people, which he hath wounded and broken, not for his pleasure, but for their profit, that they may become in a larger measure partakers of his holiness, and thus become qualified for an higher degree of the life and happiness which can be found only in his favour. All that we can do for you, will, I trust, be done with something of the spirit of human and christian friendship; we will still give you the place of a favourite friend, in our affections, and in our sympathy; and we will endeavour to bear you on our hearts, particularly in our prayers. At the same time, I cannot forbear to remind you of the satisfaction which we feel on your account, and of the ground of thankfulness to the God of your and our mercies, which is afforded, by the grace and strength which he has manifestly given you, (in answer to the prayer of faith) to prepare you for, and to support you under, the renewed trial to which he has called you. It would seem, indeed, as if we had reason, rather to congratulate you, than to condole with you;

on account of those repeated, painful trials, with which you have been visited, as in these you have received the distinguishing tokens of your Heavenly Father's love, who chastens those whom he loves, and often scourges, most severely, those whom he receives with peculiar regard and honor; and as under these trials, he has so remarkably furnished you with strength according to your day, and with grace to enable you to glorify him in the day of visitation. In him may you still be enabled to hope, to trust, and to rejoice, as the God of your salvation, and the portion of your soul; and may he still be with you, to keep you and to bless you, to bless you by all his dealings with you, and to conduct you in the right, the best way, to that everlasting rest which remaineth for his people!

How melancholy is the account which you give, of the prevalence and the ravages of that fatal epidemic, the spotted fever, in Farmington, and the towns adjacent; under which not only *your dear Joseph Ebenezer*, ("in whom you have lost the name, and a very striking portrait of your late husband, deservedly most dear to you,") but many other of your very near and dear friends, have fallen the lamented victims, "cut off in the midst of life and usefulness!" May it please the Lord speedily to say, to this destructive scourge, "It is enough!" and restore that precious, but too generally abused blessing of health, to the people, who have been visited with this awful chastisement of his holy hand! to those who have been called to mourn under it, the loss of nearest connexions and dearest friends; may he vouchsafe his supporting, sanctifying, comforting grace: and to the inhabitants generally, may the alarm and the distress which it has occasioned,

be abundantly compensated, by the pouring out of his spirit from on high upon them, and by a glorious revival of the work of his grace among them, whereby multitudes may be turned from their sins, the causes of all God's judgments, and engaged to fly for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before them, in the Saviour of sinners, in whom they will be secure from all that is truly formidable in sickness and death, and in whom they may at all times, and in all circumstances, triumph in the hope of a blessed and a glorious immortality!

The goodness and mercy of the Lord, have remarkably attended us hitherto, since we left home, by sea and by land: and my health seems to be already sensibly improved. Oh for humble, thankful, obedient hearts!

On the 11th or 12th inst. we expect, with Divine permission, to proceed on our journey eastward. As we travel slowly, and occasionally stay a little time where we find it convenient and agreeable, we may not, perhaps, reach Middleton till the week following, say about the 20th. With a melancholy satisfaction, if the Lord so appoint, we will meet you there. How much greater would have been the pleasure of meeting you at home in Farmington, with your family and friends around you in health and peace! But the Lord knows best what is best for us, and his will be done! My dear Jane is very well, and in christian love to you and yours, very cordially joins with your very affectionate friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, OCTOBER 5, 1809.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR kind, and good, and interesting letter, extending from the 30th of August, to the 7th of September, and reaching me, at this great distance, within the space of twenty three days, viz. on the 30th ult. after taking leave of your pen, I now *begin* to acknowledge, in the hope that this may be finished in time for travelling to you, in the course of a month at the farthest, from the present date.

Some two or three months ago, I received, in a package with other books, &c. from Philadelphia, some two or three copies of the Report, &c. of the Bible Society, lately established in that city, but without any letter accompanying them. On the subject of the establishment of a similar society in this city, I have thought again and again, and the result of my reflections is, that the attempt is not likely to be attended with the success that would be desirable. Among the reasons which have led to this conclusion, are, 1st, The existence of the Society for promoting the interests of religion, consisting of members belonging to our own congregations here, &c. which embraces the *gratuitous distribution of the Bible*, as *one* of its *leading objects*; and, 2dly, and chiefly, the difficulty which exists here, of collecting, with any tolerable punctuality, the annual contributions, which may be subscribed to

the support of Institutions, of a character so purely religious. Liberal donations, in proportion to the resources of the donors, to charitable purposes, humane and pious, may be obtained here, with as much facility, perhaps, as in any part of our land, city, or country. But *annual contributions, subscribed to the same purposes*, do not seem to be well recollected, at the time when they are due; and they are often altogether, and for ever forgotten, or at least neglected. Whether this may be occasioned by the heat, or any other quality of our climate or atmosphere, relaxing the tenacity of the memory, and rendering it incapable of extending itself to the distance of a year, so as to recollect distinctly, and to meet cheerfully, the return of an annual period, when it comes round, demanding again the money, which having been *once* paid, was no more thought of; as *to be paid again*, is a question, which I leave to you, as a medical man, a chymist, and a philosopher, to solve. In the mean time, I have the satisfaction of informing you, that a subscription paper, headed by one of those pamphlets, has been lately put in motion among us, and that within a few days, while it was in my hands, were obtained three subscriptions of fifty dollars each, with some others from twenty, down to five dollars, amounting to upwards of two hundred dollars, *as donations to the Philadelphia Bible Society*. It has since been committed to the attentions of a friend, who I presume has obtained considerable additions to the above sum; and after receiving it again, I hope to have an opportunity of handing it to some other friends, with further success; say, now, $270. Giving the Bible to those who are not *able* to purchase it, or who would have their attention to it particular-

ly excited, by the circumstance of their *receiving it as a present*, has long been regarded by me as one of the most important and promising objects, to which the charity of christians can be directed; and more especially so, the giving of the Bible, *in their native languages*, to the *Heathen nations*, who are capable of reading it, and who are willing to receive and read it, when thus presented to them. Thus disposed, it seems are many, very many, among the various populous nations of the East, at this day. And what christian can forbear most cordially wishing, "God speed," to those noble spirited, generous hearted lovers of Jesus, and friends of Zion, who are at this day, thus giving the *Book of God* to those people, who have been so long destitute of its Divine and saving light; and therefore perishing, because, in their regions, there has been no such heavenly vision, to guide them into the way of salvation?

October 9th. Have you seen *the Star in the East?* I mean Dr. Buchanan's *Missionary Sermon*, lately preached in England, and published under *this title?* If not, you have a pleasure yet to come. It is truly an evangelical, eloquent, and most excellent discourse, and gives us more satisfactory information, respecting the progress and the triumphs of the gospel, in the countries of the East, than any publication which I have seen. He tells the people of Britain, that they have it in their power, greatly to promote the cause of christianity in India, but that they have no power to destroy it; that it would be as easy to extinguish christianity in Great Britain, as in India; where there are thousands, and hundreds of thousands of christians, and that while the people of Great Britain are contending, whether it be a proper thing to convert the Hin-

doos, they will go on extending the bounds of their churches, and enjoying the blessings of the gospel, regardless of all opposition. What christian heart will not leap for joy, at such good news, and what christian hand would not, if it had opportunity, open itself wide in ministering to the support, and promotion of so glorious a cause? On the last sabbath of September, I took the liberty of presenting in my discourse, some extracts to my hearers, from this admirable sermon, and of commending it to their pernsal. In the course of the Tuesday following, of an *hundred* copies that were on sale, at M's book store, *not one* remained to be purchased. But a new supply is ordered.

I am, very affectionately, yours,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. F.

CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 15, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE death of Major Lawrence must be deeply felt as an heavy loss, to his family and friends, and also to your church, of which he was an eminently worthy member and deacon, and a zealous, active, liberal supporter. To himself, I doubt not, it has been gain indeed, gain, unspeakably great and everlasting! Through a mistake, respecting a message left at my house, when I was out, I did not know of his being in town, when he made his late and last visit to this city, till he had been several days at Mrs. S's. I called to see him there two or three times. The scene on those

occasions, was, in my view, interesting and instructive to all concerned ; and consoling and animating to the friends of Jesus and of Zion, in a degree which I have rarely seen equalled, and still more rarely, if ever, surpassed. His views of Christ, as the most needful, and suitable, and sufficient, and precious Saviour of his soul: his faith, trust, and hope in him, his grateful love to him, and his calm, sweet submission to his holy will, and wise disposal ; his affectionate desire to live to the Lord, his Maker and Redeemer, and to die to him, and to glorify and enjoy him for ever : his cordial satisfaction and cheerful confidence in committing his family, and friends, and the church, to the care and keeping, and blessing of the same gracious God and Saviour, with whom he had intrusted his own soul, and all his interests, temporal, spiritual and eternal ; and the unaffected humility, which he manifested, as flowing from a deep sense of his sinfulness and unworthiness ; all combined to throw such a lustre around the scene, in which this good man was suffering and glorifying God, as made it appear indeed, to be privileged beyond, far beyond, the brightest and most admired scenes of worldly joy. In this case, surely we may well " congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb with wreathes triumphant." While affection and friendship, while humanity and piety, drop their tears to his memory, let his example, as it displayed the power of Divine grace in his life, and in his death, excite and engage us to be better followers of him, and of all them, who through faith and patience have gone to inherit the promises of grace fulfilled in glory !

I still feel, as I have been accustomed heretofore to feel, very sensibly for your little church, tossed by so

many storms, and tried in so many ways. But if our Lord has a cause to support among you, he will not leave you helpless, nor comfortless, nor lifeless. May you not take encouragement, from the things which your Lord has shewn you in the way of mercy and favour, in the midst of all your difficulties and fears, that he does not intend to kill you, and that he will not leave you to perish? Still pray and hope, and wait for a time of reviving and refreshing from his presence. Some new blessings, I hope will be sent to you by the hand of your worthy pastor, now at length mercifully restored to you, after so long an absence. As he comes back to you with a desirable addition to his health, which stood in great need of recruiting, I trust he will at the same time, have come to you again, in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ! If it be the will of the great Head of the church, to uphold you, and make you fruitful as a branch of that church, which he has bought with his blood, and which he honors with his constant presence, protection, and favour; he will provide you with friends, helpers, and resources, for supporting the ordinances and ministrations of his gospel among you. And the interpositions of his Providence, for this purpose, may be often the most confidently expected, by a bold and adventurous faith, when timid reason, and cowardly sense, and a subtle, malicious adversary, would tempt you most to despond. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in the Lord." Truly my soul waiteth upon God, from him cometh my salvation. "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence, I shall not be moved," &c.*

* Psalm lxii.

Our Bible Society, is just beginning to distribute its Bibles, with the prospect of increasing demand upon its funds, as soon as its charitable design shall be extensively known. General P. lately sent us a $50 Bank Note, informing us, that he believed he could distribute a considerable number of Bibles in his neighbourhood, with advantage. We enrolled him a member for life, and sent him three dozen Bibles. More than a dozen dozen have been applied for, to supply the wants of the poor in other quarters; and it is not doubted, that applications will increase, as distributions are made. Farewell.

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MR. J. S.

CHARLESTOWN, (Mass.) AUGUST 11th—14th, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR,

ABOUT the 20th of July, while we were in Middleton, Connecticut, a very acceptable letter, written by your good daughter M. our much esteemed friend, together with another from Mr. H. came safely to hand. The receipt of M's letter was acknowledged, in a long letter which J. had been writing; and it is hoped that it may have, in due time, found a safe conveyance to Charleston. As my little *secretary* crowded half a dozen pages of her letter to her friend, with a variety of particulars relative to our journey, the delightful scenes through which we had passed, and the many acquaintances and friends, new and old, with whom we had the pleasure of spending some time on

our way, and especially respecting our very dear friend, Mrs. W. and several of her worthy connexions, &c. &c. I refer you to those communications for the information, which I know you and all your good family would be desirous of receiving from us, after our departure from Philadelphia; and I am happy in being able to come off so well, in having your friendly wishes in this respect gratified, without being obliged myself to undertake the task, which she has executed with much more facility, and much more minutely and satisfactorily, than it would have been done by my own pen. There is, indeed, scarcely any employment more burdensome and fatiguing to me, than that of writing. Let not the three 4to sheets, which I sent you from Philadelphia, or this folio now, be interpreted as furnishing a contradiction to the preceding observation; for one principal reason of my giving you such lengthy scrawls, when I do take up my pen, is, because I do not calculate on writing often. Yet you see that I am not disposed to be ceremonious with you, as I do not wait for an answer to my long letter sent from Philadelphia, before I begin again, with some prospect, if I can find leisure sufficient, of filling up for you the formidable sheet now before me. I am indeed sorry that there was such an apology to be offered in your behalf, for omitting to write to me, as that suggested in M's letter, viz. the great debility which you felt, under the oppressive heat of the weather. In that respect, I hope from the agreeable changes of the weather, you may have experienced desirable relief from time to time; and at all events, I persuade myself, that as is your day, so will be your strength, especially in the inward man. And highly privileged, and eminently favoured, shall we respective-

ly be, if the strength of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, be made perfect in our weakness; and if his grace be made sufficient for us, in all the seasons and circumstances of life, and especially in its closing scene, the solemn, trying hour of death, how important, how desirable, when in that interesting hour, our heart and flesh shall fail us, to have the Lord our Redeemer then with us, as the strength of our heart, and the portion of our souls for ever! And thus shall all be favoured and blessed, who have lived by faith in him, as the Lord their righteousness and strength. They who are prepared to die, in and through him, shall be made more than conquerors over the last enemy; and when dismissed from the labours and trials, the comforts and sorrows of earth and time, shall be ever with their Lord, beholding his glory, and partaking of his joy. May such be the happiness enjoyed by us, and by all in whose present and everlasting welfare, we are bound to feel our hearts most deeply and tenderly interested.

From Middleton, on the 25th July, we proceeded about 10 or 11 miles to Weathersfield, accompanied by our friend Mrs. W. On the 27th we dined with the Rev. Dr. M. in Weathersfield, where we experienced a cordial hospitality, and very polite and pleasing attentions, during the few hours of our stay in that worthy family. Towards the evening we went on to Hartford, having still the pleasure of Mrs. W's company. Her oldest brother lives here, who is a very pious man, and in respect to religion, is much blessed in his family. We spent the night in the family of Mr. N. whose wife, a pious and worthy woman, is a daughter of Lieutenant Governor T. Mrs. N. had been lately called to mourn the death of a sister, the pious mother of five or six

small children, one of the victims of the fatal spotted fever, which was then prevailing in Farmington. Having enjoyed here, a scene of mingled satisfaction and sorrow, we set out on our journey on the following day at an early hour, leaving our highly esteemed, and very affectionate friend, Mrs. W. with mutual, painful regret.

From Hartford we pursued our journey through a number of beautiful towns, and afterwards through some miles of rugged country, where the houses were few, and steeples rare, to the flourishing town of Providence, in the state of Rhode Island. There, with a large party of ladies and gentlemen from Boston, we dined; and after dinner, turning out of the direct course for Boston, we went down to Bristol, (R. I.) where, from Friday evening till Monday morning, we staid at the hospitable mansion of Mr. J. R. elder brother of Mr. N. R. of our city. He is a worthy and good man, and gave me reason to hope, that he would at length join himself to the church, which he has for many years thought of doing, but from an apprehension of his unworthiness, has till now omitted. His sister has been long in communion with the church, and is a most agreeable woman, and excellent christian. The simplicity and godly sincerity, and the cordial friendship, with which we were received and entertained by these worthy persons, and the desirable opportunity which we had, for enjoying with them the freedoms of christian conversation, made our time pass there very pleasantly indeed; and I hope it was not altogether spent in vain. On Monday morning they kindly accompanied us on our way to the ferry, two miles from their house, where we took an affectionate leave of

them. We went forward, through a most delightful country, and with the most charming land and water prospects on every side, to Newport.

On Thursday, the 4th August, we turned our course again for Boston, 72 miles distant from Newport; and towards the evening of the following day, passed through that ancient and renowned town, to the charming habitation of our very worthy, and kind, and pleasant friends; where their truly benevolent and affectionate attentions, constrained us to feel ourselves very much indeed at home.

August 12th, Mrs. K. is much better this morning, while I have myself, since yesterday morning, been considerably indisposed with a cold and cough, attended with some fever; but the symptoms to day seem to indicate, that the indisposition may prove to be slight and transient. Dr. and Mrs. M. are well; he, as usual, is deeply engaged in a variety and multiplicity of business, and takes an active part among a number of faithful brethren, who are of the congregational clergy of this state; by whose united counsels, several highly important measures have been adopted, and are now carrying into execution, with a zeal worthy of the friends of Zion, and with the most promising prospect of success, for the support and promotion of evangelical truth, and of the church which the Redeemer has bought with his blood. Among the measures alluded to, are the forming of a General Association of the numerous ministers throughout the state, who love and preach the doctrines of grace, generally denominated *Calvinistic;* the circulation of that valuable periodical work, the Panoplist, the publication of which commenced with 1250 copies, and has now risen to more than 4000, the collecting of a new church, and the erection

of a spacious house of worship in Boston, and the founding of a Theological school at Andover, for the purpose of securing to pious young men, candidates for the gospel ministry, the best means for pursuing their studies in divinity, and acquiring the qualifications, by which they may be prepared, to support the character, and discharge the duties of pastors and teachers, with the greatest honor to themselves, and benefit to the churches. The success which has already attended the endeavours to obtain adequate funds, for this excellent institution, has been astonishingly great, and seems to afford a most encouraging evidence, that the work is of the Lord, and that it will be prospered by his blessing. As a sample of the auspicious beginning of this great and good work, under His smiles, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, I cannot forbear mentioning the names of a few of its benefactors, and the amount of the truly generous and noble benefactions by which they have, with the highest credit to their own christian characters and principles, expressed their approbation of it, and their pious, ardent zeal for its establishment and usefulness: viz. Mr. Norris, of Salem, $10,000; Mr. Brown, of Newburyport, $10,000; Mr. Bartlett, also of Newburyport, in cash, $20,000, and funds which give an interest, making them adequate to the further sum of $15,000; Mr. Abbot, of Andover, $20,000; Madam Philips and son erect a building, valued at the sum of 16,000; the late Lieutenant Governor Philips $5,000, the interest for charitable distribution, in religious books, &c. All the above, lately given, in addition to funds previously on hand, to the amount of $20,000, provided for the support of theological students, &c. And from one of the above gentlemen, who

is advanced in years and has no children; the patrons of the institution expect to receive, in due time, in addition to the sum of $20,000 already given, the further value of 20 or $30,000, to be left by will; say amount total $140,000 or 150,000. How highly privileged are the persons, to whom the Lord has graciously given the means, *with the heart*, for performing such munificent and beneficial acts of christian charity! And how animating the prospect opened by the word of God, to all who love Zion, and seek her good, according to the means in their power, when it is declared that they shall themselves prosper; and that they who thus sow bountifully, shall also reap bountifully. I had forgot to tell you, that three professors, to fill three departments in this contemplated Theological School, are already appointed: viz. Rev. Dr. Woods, Dr. Pearson, late of Cambridge University, and Dr. Griffin, of Newark, New Jersey, if his own consent and that of his church can be obtained.

It has given me peculiar pleasure on our journey to find, that in many of the churches in which we have been, and in many more from which we have heard, there are pleasing and growing revivals of religion, confirming the precious truth, that when the enemy of the church comes in like a flood, to overwhelm the church, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him, and adapted to animate the praises and the prayers, and exertions of all who prefer the cause of Jerusalem, involving in it all the great, immortal interests of mankind, above their chief joy. It is my prayer and hope, that our own church, to which I feel myself united, in a most interesting relation, and by many of the most endearing ties, will still be favoured by the glorious Head of the

church universal, with a rich supply of those blessings of his grace, which he is at this day showering down so abundantly on other branches of it. May he preserve my fellow labourer in the enjoyment of health and strength, and abundantly prosper his labours of love among our dear people, during my absence; may our Lord's peace and blessing be with him and his family, and the whole church; and may his prayers, and those of the church, in which we desire still to be kindly remembered, be heard and answered, in such blessings of the providence and grace of God, as may be best for us. Amidst all the delightful scenes with which we are here surrounded, and the very pleasing attentions of the many, many worthy and amiable christian friends, whose society we have been and are daily enjoying, our hearts still anticipate, with peculiar pleasure, the desired period when, if the Lord will, we shall again be restored to the circle of our affectionately beloved and very dear friends in Charleston, among whom we particularly number yourself and your good family.

In love and best wishes to you all, Mrs. K. cordially joins with your friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO DR. M.

CHARLESTON, SEPTEMBER 25, to 28, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your favour of July 20th, ult. did not come to hand until near the close of August. Mr. J. L. the bearer of it, was favoured with a very fine passage of about four days. We were glad to see him at home again, safe and well; and glad to receive by him, your friendly epistolary communications, always welcome, and highly valued; and mingled on this occasion with the pleasure of seeing a dear friend, who had so lately seen our dear friends, in such good health, and had enjoyed the hospitality of their house, and the overflowing benevolence and friendship of their hearts, with such a cordial relish and high satisfaction. Right glad indeed, should we have been, to have partaken of the *rich feast*, which was mutually enjoyed by yourselves, Mr. H. Mr. L. &c. And not less glad would we be to have you both here again, partaking of the plain fare of our friendship, reciprocated by the flow of your souls. But whether such a desirable season of personal, pleasing, interesting intercourse, is ever to be renewed, in *C——ton* or in *C——town*, depends entirely on the sovereign will and wise appointment of our Lord, in whose hands our times are, and whose are all our ways, and who doth all things well, whether he grants or

withholds the desires of our hearts, with respect to the circumstances or events of this mortal life. May he teach us his will, and give us the experience of that peculiar happiness, which is found in doing it, and in submitting to it from the heart!

We cannot express the pleasure which we have felt in hearing from time to time, of the very comfortable state of health to which you have been mercifully restored, and which you have both generally enjoyed, since your visit to this city. May this blessing be long continued to you both, for your own comfort, and for the temporal and eternal benefit of many others; and especially of your dear children, and the children of friends, towards whom you are acting the part of the most affectionate and faithful parents.

Our Bible Society has succeeded much beyond my first expectations in its favour. I intend sending you a copy of the printed Report of its proceedings, during the first year of its existence. Our church is blessed with some desirable tokens of the presence and blessing of its glorious and gracious Lord and Head. The societies meeting in our house on Wednesday evening, have been uncommonly full, through the spring and summer, and the attention to the religious exercises on those occasions, has been close and solemn, and in many instances, especially of the young persons attending, the most tender and serious impressions have been manifested. Several of these, and among them, Miss S. H. with two or three other amiable young ladies, are expected to join the church on the next sacramental season. May these pleasing, refreshing drops, increase to an abundant shower of grace, and many more happy

individuals, partaking of its rich blessings, be added to the church, among such as shall be saved.

Thursday morning, 26th. Last evening, the society here was still larger than it has ever been before. The number must have amounted to but little short of two hundred persons, among whom were a considerable proportion of our Episcopal neighbours, and very many young persons, their parents' joy, and the rising hopes of the church. May the Lord bless them, and make them a seed to serve him, and honor them as the instruments of transmitting the blessings of his gospel to the generation which is to follow them!

You have no doubt, through the channel of the newspapers, received some information of the dreadful *tornado*, which passed through our city, on the 10th day of this month; which was, in the suddenness of its attack, the rapidity of its progress, and the destruction of life and property that marked its course, one of the most awful temporal calamities with which our city has ever been visited. The terrors of the scene far exceeded all the descriptive powers of language; and imagination itself would fain shrink from the contemplation of them. When we think of a multitude of the dwellings of men, perhaps an hundred or more, many of which were among the fairest and strongest in our city, assailed by the violence of this mighty whirlwind, and shaken in an instant into heaps of ruins, or shattered and damaged to a degree, but little short of destruction; when we think of a number of the inhabitants of these dwellings, exceeding at least half a score, crushed, at the same instant, down to the shades of death; while others scarcely escaped with painful, if not dangerous and fatal fractures and wounds; and others again,

were rescued from the yawning jaws of destruction almost, if not entirely unhurt, as by miracles of mercy; and when we think of this destructive tornado, passing in a space of considerable breadth, say 60 or 70 yards, from one extremity of our city to another, almost with the rapidity of lightning, scarcely giving the alarm of its approach, before the desolation attending its progress was completed; our souls cannot but still shudder at the recollection of a scene so tremendous, so distressing in its circumstances and its consequences!

For a detailed account of this awful calamity, I refer you to the newspaper which accompanies this, the Times, of September 17th. This is stated to be *a revised* account, printed a week after the dreadful occurrence. It is, however, far from being very full, and in some instances, it is very incorrect. To you, however, who are so well acquainted in this city, the particulars included in this account, the best that has yet been published, will no doubt be very interesting; and probably, the editors of your papers, may not have thought it necessary to communicate such a detailed account in their papers; as not supposing, that in this form, it would command much of the attention of the public in your region, where only a few of their readers have any particular knowledge of Charleston, or its inhabitants. It is for this reason that I send the paper above mentioned, under the same cover with this.

On visiting Mr. R. and family, the day after the calamity, while in the survey of the very great injury done to his spacious and elegant mansion, and furniture, the eye could not fail deeply to affect the heart. It was at the same time peculiarly consolatory and gratifying, to hear the whole family uniting in expressions of the

warmest gratitude, to the adorable Preserver of men, who had given them, in the midst of the ruins with which they were surrounded, their own lives for a prey, without having suffered any material injury in their persons. Mrs R. with the piety and humility, so well becoming her christian profession, and her exemplary liberality, in which she and her worthy husband have long been distinguished and honorable rivals, observed, "that probably this heavy stroke had been inflicted, as a correction and admonition, for the purpose of exciting them to make a better improvement of the possessions, with which a bountiful Providence had intrusted them, and to do more good with them in future, than they had heretofore done;" and they, one and all, concurred in expressing the hope, that the lives which the Lord had so remarkably made his care, would be more unreservedly devoted to him, and more faithfully employed in his service. As in all cases, so especially in such seasons and circumstances, how glorious, how amiable, does the religion of Jesus appear! And how secure and happy, are his genuine friends and followers, amidst "the war of elements and the crush of worlds!"

The article in the first column of the newspaper, which mentions the singular preservation of *two young ladies*, relates to the family of our friend, the hon. Judge D. One of those ladies was his married daughter, Mrs. G. who was daily looking out for the period of her confinement, which took place very soon after she was rescued from the ruins of the fallen chambers, with which she was for a time completely covered, and under which she was not discovered, by her astonished and distressed husband, and parents, and family, until she was enabled to speak, and begged them not to step

on her. She was not lying on the bed, but, having gone out of her chamber into the drawing room, where most of the family were together, in order to inquire what was the cause of the alarm, which was at first supposed to be a dreadful fire, she had just entered her chamber again, at the N. E. corner of the house, when she met the glass of the windows, driven furiously all over the room, and hastened towards the head of the bed, for the purpose of sheltering herself with the pillows from the injury, which she apprehended from the fragments of glass, and of the broken sashes. The negro girl, about 15 or 16 years of age, who was killed by her side, had run under the bed at the same time, to avoid the same danger; and her sister Eliza, the next daughter younger than Miss C. had but just entered the chamber, when an immense stack of chimnies, containing five or six funnels, was precipitated through the roof of the house, bringing along with it the floor and ceiling of the garret, directly over this chamber, which, with the several persons, and all the articles in it, was immediately added to the falling mass, and the whole accumulated weight, descending to the floor of the room below, carried that also with all its contents, down to the cellar, which was used as a kitchen. Out of the lower room, one of the younger sons of the family had fled but a moment before, and in his fright and haste, fell over the sill of the door, where one of his feet was just grazed by some of the falling materials; and out of the kitchen cellar, an elderly black woman, the cook of the family, had run to see where the supposed fire was, and a negro fellow, who heard the crash above, had the presence of mind to jump out of the window, in the very instant before the place was

filled with the descending ruins. In the midst of these ruins, some of the furniture of Mrs. G's chamber, directed by the invisible hand of her Almighty and most gracious Protector, had fallen around and over her in such a manner, as to defend her in a great measure from the bricks, and the pieces of timber, which would otherwise, probably, have overwhelmed her with instant destruction. She suffered only some flesh bruises, which she scarcely felt at first, but which have since been attended with considerable pain, but from which it is hoped she will be soon happily relieved. Her unborn infant, a fine son, escaped unhurt. Her sister E. was but slightly bruised, though much more alarmed and agitated than herself. Through the broken roof, and the now tremendous void space between that and the cellar, the rain, which followed the tornado, poured down like a torrent, by which Mrs. G. and the family, anxiously engaged in looking for her, and in extricating her from her most distressing and perilous situation, were almost as effectually drenched, as if they had been plunged into a river. Yet from this circumstance, neither she nor any of the family, I believe, has suffered any injury. In a word, the circumstances of this very respectable and amiable family, on this solemn occasion, were peculiarly affecting and interesting. The alarm and the distress, the preservation and the deliverance experienced, were equally remarkable. Amidst the terrors of a scene unspeakably awful, what wonders of divine power and mercy were displayed? The hearts of the family generally, and especially of the worthy affectionate parents, have been, as you may well suppose, very tenderly and deeply impressed with the sentiments of reverence, adoration,

and gratitude, towards Him who directed and controlled the storm, who in the midst of judgment, remembered and shewed mercy, in a manner so remarkable, and so wonderful! May their souls rejoice in his salvation, spiritual as well as temporal, and all their lives be praise! This awful and destructive tornado, passed within less than an hundred yards of our house, at the intersection of Tradd Street, on which we live; and King Street, to the eastward of us, where it did some damage, in blowing down part of a brick wall of the garden, and blowing off some of the slate or shingles from the roof of the house. We distinctly heard the tremendous roaring of this mighty wind, from its first entrance, and the commencement of its ravages in our city. The sound was like that of many carriages, rattling over a rough pavement, or rather like that of many chimnies on fire, and in full blaze at the same time. We at first supposed it to be thunder, and then apprehended that a dreadful fire had bursted forth in the house of our near neighbour, or in our own house immediately over our heads: and then we saw a multitude of slates, which had been hurled through the air from Mr. R's buildings, mingled with shingles and pieces of broken laths, and rafters, &c. from other houses near to us, falling in an horrid shower, all around our habitation; while we knew not yet the cause of all this wild uproar, and of these alarming appearances, our astonishment and agitation, you may well suppose, were very great; never indeed greater, if ever equalled, on any other occasion. The desolation made in our city, was completed in a very few minutes, and we remained for some time in a state of painful suspense, before we were informed of the nature, and the ex-

tent of the calamity. O! how peculiarly merciful and kind was the protecting care of our God, "who was our refuge, and covered us with the shadow of his wings, until this calamity was overpast;" and suffered not "the evil to fall upon our persons, nor to come nigh, or nearer to our dwelling!" May our lives, and all the personal and domestic comforts of them, be henceforth consecrated with increased gratitude, affection, and zeal, to the service and glory of the God of our salvation and of our mercies!

On the following sabbath, I endeavoured to stir up my own heart, and to engage the hearts of my numerous hearers, to some suitable religious improvement of this awful visitation of divine Providence, in a discourse on the 8th verse of the xlvi. Psalm. "Come and behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth!" The audience was remarkably attentive and solemn, and the minds of many, it is hoped, were usefully impressed. How desirable would it be, if the inhabitants of our city generally, all of whom have seen, and many of whom have deeply felt the judgments of God, which have been abroad among us, would now learn righteousness; would now repent and turn from all their transgressions; so that iniquity may not yet be their ruin! And may the Lord grant us his grace, to dispose and constrain us to "return unto Him, who hath smitten and torn us, that he may heal and bind us up" again; and by a glorious revival of his work of grace, and display of his salvation among us, give us "to see good, according to the days in which we have seen evil!"

Yours, very affectionately,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO MRS. H.

ON THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND.

CHARLESTON, JUNE 22, 1815.

THE interesting communication from the pen of Mrs. T. under date of April 27th, informing us of the heavy affliction with which it had pleased the Lord to visit you, our dear friend, by taking from you, with a stroke, your dear and excellent husband, we received in due course by mail. I much regret, that the due acknowledgment of that letter has been so long delayed. This has been occasioned, partly by my absence in the country, and partly by long continued bodily indisposition, produced by a severe cold, which has unfitted me for almost any active exertion, and has made the labour of writing, especially, extremely irksome to me. My health is now, through mercy, a little better; but when in the best state, in which I have enjoyed it for a considerable time past, it is very infirm and delicate; and thus it is adapted to remind me, that "the time is short," and to renew from day to day, with a strong impression, the solemn admonition, "Be thou also ready!"

Such instruction and admonition have been of late, indeed, particularly enforced, as with "line upon line," by the deaths of some near and highly valued connexions and friends; especially a beloved sister in Pennsylvania, and of several of my brethren in the ministry. Considering the comparatively small number of gospel

ministers in this country, an unusual proportion died in the course of the past summer and fall. And since your visit to the southward, no less than three of that little band of pious and worthy brethren, who then frequently met and spent many pleasing, improving, social hours together here, and at the same time, mingled their anxious benevolent feelings, and prayers, and efforts, for accomplishing an object most important and desirable to individuals, and to the church of Christ our Lord, have ceased from their labours, and gone to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. First Dr. Abeel, of New York, then Dr. Clarkson, of John's Island, in September last; and now, your dear Mr. H. whose memory will be long affectionately cherished by many here, as well as by many more, nearer the scenes of his principal labours and usefulness.

That season, remarkable for the meeting of several of the worthiest and best ministers of the northern churches, in this southern region, and made peculiarly pleasant to us by the company of such good and agreeable friends, how soon did it pass away! And how often has it been since recollected, with the various mingled emotions of pleasure, of regret, and of *apprehension;* the apprehension that it was not, in all its circumstances, to be ever renewed on earth; as it was not probable that we should all meet again on this side of the eternal world. That apprehension has been painfully realized, once and again, in the cases of those who were in the succeeding seasons summoned away; and now, in the case of your dear husband, who has followed them, and again met with them, before the throne of their common Lord, in his heavenly kingdom! Happy they, who

have thus entered into the joy of their Lord, while we are yet left to mourn here below!

Your sorrows, my dear friend, under the bereaving stroke of the holy hand of God, which has fallen so heavily upon you, are shared by the affectionate, sympathizing hearts of a number of kind friends here, as well as by our own. But none, I believe, experience indeed has taught me to believe that none, excepting those who have felt it, can properly estimate the greatness and poignancy of the affliction, involved in the loss of the best of friends, long enjoyed in the nearest and tenderest of all mortal connexions, and possessed in an high degree of the qualifications which made them the most desirable and valuable companions and helpers, in all the variety of circumstances and interests, pertaining to life and godliness. They who are called to suffer such a loss as this, have reason indeed to say, "I am the person that has seen affliction." Such is the language which you have now learned by experience, to adopt as your own; and the painful import of it, you will feel for a long time to come, and often with increased emotions, when you reflect, that the face once so pleasant to behold, you will no more see in the land of the living; that the interchange of hearts, of joys, of sorrows, and cares, and the sweet counsels taken together in the ways of God; in short, the various hours and instances of intimate, social, friendly, christian intercourse, will recur no more; that his example of an humble and close walk with God, of sincere and fervent piety, of faithfulness to God and man, in scenes of active duty in public and private, and of calm submission to the divine will, under sufferings and trials, will shine no more before you and others, for

your and their instruction, encouragement, and comfort; and that no more will his heart, with his voice, be lifted up at the mercy seat, in prayer for you and your children; for the church, his country, and the world. But why should I thus open afresh the wounds of your bleeding heart, by reminding you of the greatness, the extent of your loss? Rather let me attempt to sooth and alleviate the anguish and bitterness of your soul, which must be felt, when such recollections are exclusively indulged, by reminding you what reason you have at the same time, for consolation and thankfulness, as you have not been called to sorrow, like one having no hope, for your dear departed friend; but on the contrary, to be comforted, and to rejoice on his account, in the persuasion that he now rests from his labours and trials on earth, and has entered into the joy, the full and everlasting joy of his Lord, in heaven!! Take then your harp from the willows, and with submission and gratitude, with tears of joy, and the anticipations of hope, sing away your sorrows, believing and persuaded, that

"His months of affliction are o'er,
His days and his nights of distress;
You see him in anguish no more,
He's gained his happy release.

No sickness, or sorrow, or pain,
Shall ever disquiet him now;
For death to his spirit was gain,
Since Christ was his life when below."

And now when the earthen vessel, to which the rich treasure of the gospel was committed, and which contained so many of your sweetest and best mortal comforts, is broken; how great also is the consolation, on your own account secured to you, by the everlasting

covenant of grace, while it assures you, that the Lord, the ever living, all sufficient, and unchanging God, is your Friend and Saviour, your refuge and portion in the land of the living; that he will never leave you nor forsake you, but will be found ready, by his gracious presence, to fill the great and wide breach, which he has made in your social, mortal comforts. He is ready to turn the tears of your present mourning, into songs of everlasting joy and praise, by making this affliction, which nature feels to be great and heavy, but which faith, contemplating it in the view of eternity, pronounces to be light and but for a moment, not only yield to you the present peaceable fruit of righteousness, but work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of future glory.

But what can I suggest, adapted to give your thoughts their right direction, or to sooth your sorrows, which is not already familiar to your own mind? Long have you, as I trust and believe, been taught of God, by his word and Spirit, to understand, and with an approving, adoring heart, to acknowledge, that he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; that he doth no wrong to any of his creatures, and that as he doth all things well on the great scale, so in his infinite wisdom, grace and love, he orders and sanctifies all things to work for good, to them that love him; and long, as I doubt not, have you found by experience, that all the paths of the Lord towards you have been mercy and truth, while many of those things, which for awhile seemed to be most against you, have at length, appeared to be most favourable in their tendency and effects, to the promotion of your best interests, your spiritual interests at least, if not your temporal. Let your faith and persuasion of these things, be now strong,

and grow still stronger and stronger, and in the multitude of your troubled, anxious thoughts within you, let the comforts resulting from the firm belief of these things, still delight your soul.

And may He to whom it belongs to give peace effectually back to you, afflicted and destitute, as you may now feel yourself, to say from the heart, and with a cordial satisfaction, the Lord is my portion, therefore will I hope in him, yea, I will still joy in the God of my salvation. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and by thy providence and grace, in the right and best way, through the changing scenes of mortality, the darkest and most perplexing, as well as the more pleasing and comfortable, and afterward receive me to glory. To the word and to the Spirit of his grace, I commend you; and it is my earnest prayer, that while you have the consolation of knowing, that in covenant faithfulness, and for your present spiritual profit, and the advancement of your future eternal joy, the Lord has afflicted you; your dear children also, who are sharers with you in your affliction, and who are spared, I trust, to be in various ways comforters to you, may know that it is good for them to be thus afflicted, while this severe affliction, through the supply of the spirit of Christ, is made to turn to their salvation. When forsaken or deprived of so valuable a father, whose counsels and prayers, were so affectionately employed and continued for their present and eternal welfare, let their hearts be the more earnestly engaged in praying for themselves, that the Lord their heavenly Father, may take them up, and be their guide and guardian, their friend and Saviour, and sanctify them as seed that shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation, which

he will delight to bless and to honor. May the Lord indeed bless them, and make them blessings ; and prepare and engage them to follow one parent, already gone to inherit the promises of grace fulfilled in glory, and to accompany another, "Yet marching through Immanuel's ground, to fairer world's on high."

The bereaved church and congregation, lately favoured with his ministerial services, will, I hope, receive admonition from the frowning Providence, which has thus deprived them of the many inestimable blessings included in a faithful gospel ministry ; while they will, I trust, feel that it is their duty, to bow with submission to the sovereign will of the Lord, who has an absolute right, whenever he pleases to remove from a people, the pastor whom he had appointed to watch for their souls, and to call out of his vineyard a faithful labourer, who before he had borne the burden and heat of the day, so long as some others have done, were called home to their rest and reward. And let them, now with united hearts and fervent prayers, look up to the great Head of the church, who has smitten them, that he may heal them, that he may sanctify to them the heavy afflictive stroke with which he has visited them, and speedily send them another pastor after his own heart, who shall feed them with the knowledge of the pure gospel, and by a worthy example of christian faith and piety, go before them in the way to glory, honor and immortality.

In a poor state of health, and under the debilitating effects of very warm weather, I have, with an evident want of mental vigor, and no small degree of bodily fatigue, extended this letter to an unexpected and inconvenient length. After so long a delay, let it be

kindly accepted as a proof, that I had not forgotten you in your afflictions, but was still disposed, if I had health and spirits, to express my tender sympathy for you, and to be the minister of consolation to you.

Since we have heard of the alarming state in which New London has been placed, we have feared that you and others at Norwich, may not only hear the dreadful sound of war so near you, but may be involved in some of its conflicts, or calamities. Should your hearts be in danger of being overwhelmed, may you be enabled, with a strong faith, to resort to the rock that is higher than you, and find that Jehovah is a shelter for you, and a strong tower from the enemy: and trusting in the covert of his wings, may you find that he will keep you in perfect peace, because you trust in him, and your mind and heart are stayed upon him. Hitherto, we in this city and the adjacent country, have felt the war only, or chiefly in the way of commercial losses and privations, the stagnation of almost all kinds of business, and the consequent difficulties to which many of the labouring and poorer classes especially, are reduced. But if it continues much longer, we have reason to apprehend that our city will have some experience of what others have already deeply felt, that the battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood. Oh that the Lord would give to our rulers, and to our nation, an heart deeply humbled in true repentance under his mighty hand, and disposed to turn from our abounding transgressions, that iniquity may not yet be our ruin; and that he may be entreated by the prayers of the righteous, throughout our land, and for the Redeemer's sake, to pardon our manifold national sins, to turn away all his anger from us, to deliver

us from the dreadful scourge of war, and to restore to us the blessings of a desirable and lasting peace!

Our church here, received during the past year, an addition of about eighty members; among these was your and our friend Mr. O. last fall, as well as Mrs. O. in the spring preceding. They are both truly worthy and excellent persons, and are now, I trust, with united hearts, travelling to a better country, even an heavenly.

Be so good as to make my apology to Mrs. T. for my not writing a direct answer to her excellent letter. It was read by a number of friends here, with the liveliest interest, and the tenderest sympathy. The state of my health and spirits which have so long delayed this, have prevented my answering hers in any other way, than in this communication to you. Though not personally acquainted with Mrs. T. her letter has taught us to esteem and love her. And as she has been sensibly afflicted in your afflictions, may our gracious Lord, make her a sharer with you in his sanctifying grace, and in his consolations, which are not small!

The expression of your dear M's love, and good wishes as well as your own, is very acceptable to us. We hope she will know, by happy experience, the meaning of those important words of the best of friends, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early, shall find me."

Mrs. K. reminds me that she has not written to you, as she believes, although I thought she had, since the death of her sister T. who died on the 22d of September last, after a lingering and painful illness. All who have had opportunity, have desired us to express to you their affectionate regards, and tender sympathy. You would very much oblige us by writing as soon, as

practicable, very particularly relative to Mr. H's last scene, &c. and concerning your children.

To the mercy and grace of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord, you and they are affectionately commended, by your cordial friends,

I. S. AND J. KEITH.

TO REV. DR. M.

CHARLESTON, JULY 4, 1809.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Amidst the ringing of bells, and the roaring of cannon, and all the parade, and bustle, and noise, with which this anniversary of a day so important, and so glorious to America, is celebrated here, as it is doubtless, in like manner, in a thousand other places, I am now seated in the tranquil recess of my study; and have taken up my pen, for the purpose of scrawling a few lines to you. I congratulate you on the return of this auspicious day, in circumstances adapted to diffuse the liveliest gratitude and joy, throughout the great people and vast territory of these United States. To every genuine reflecting patriot, the usual satisfactions of this day must be greatly heightened, by the recollection of the dark and portentous clouds, which were lately seen resting and spreading farther and wider upon our prospects; and by the consideration of the bright and pleasing scene, which "the good hand of our God upon us," has again opened to our view. The Lord hath indeed again done great things for us, whereof all among

us, who truly love our country, must be glad. Among the thousands, and tens of thousands, who will this day express their joy on account of these things, in pealing, and firing, and eating and drinking, and toasting and carousing, how many will be found disposed to offer the thanksgivings of a grateful heart, to the God of our mercies, to rejoice in Him as the source of their personal and social happiness, and in the prayer of faith, to commend themselves and their country, and the church, to his care and keeping, expecting safety and prosperity for the time to come, only under his smiles, and through his blessing? Many such, I trust, there are dispersed through this great community. May the Lord increase their number, how many soever they may be, an hundred fold! For these are every where the truly excellent of the earth; and they are the chief glory and strongest bulwark of every land.

* * * * * * *

A second Presbyterian church, as I believe I have already intimated to you, has been lately formed in this city, partly out of the old Scotch congregation, and partly by persons who have not heretofore been closely connected with any church in this city. These people have called, and lately settled, the Rev. A. F. as their pastor, with a salary of $2000; and they have been very successful in obtaining subscriptions, to the amount of about $35,000, for building an house of worship. This is to be of brick, 90 feet by 70, with a steeple, &c. The foundation is already laid, and the work will be carried on with all practicable despatch. I know not that the appearances of real vital religion, are yet more promising in this new congregation, than they have been for a long time in the old Presbyterian

congregation. But as Mr. F. is considered as a pious man, and an evangelical preacher, it is hoped that he may prove a blessing to them, in promoting the knowledge and practice of pure and undefiled religion among them. Mr. F. has lately sailed for the northward, intending to spend the summer abroad; and supposing it probable that he may visit Boston, I have given him a letter of introduction to you; and I expect that you will have an opportunity of hearing him preach, and of being informed of many things respecting us here, that I cannot now write. The hazards of the summer season in this climate, and especially in this city, to a family with northern constitutions, form a serious item in the calculations that should be made on this subject. How often have my fondest wishes and favourite plans, been disappointed? What a privilege is it to be brought at length by the smarting discipline of infinite Wisdom, cheerfully to acquiesce in the will and disposal of God, who alone knows what is best for us, and who doth all things well, not only on the great scale, but for every individual of his peculiar and beloved people and faithful servants! As all things shall assuredly work for good to them that love God; if we love our God and Saviour in sincerity, we may then rest assured, that if there be any other situation in the world, that would be on the whole better for us, than that in which we are now placed, he will, in the proper time and way, conduct us into it; and if there be not, then we may console and encourage ourselves with the persuasion, that abiding with him where we now are, he will be with us, furnish us with strength according to our day, and enable us acceptably to serve and glorify

him, till he shall remove us to glorify, and enjoy him for ever in heaven.

I am much pleased to hear of the hopeful beginnings, and promising prospects, of your Theological Institution. Under the smiles and blessings of heaven, may it grow and flourish more and more!

We are very much gratified with the affectionate remembrance of our *warm friend R.* united with that of his parents. May the Lord bless the lad, and make him a blessing! By his Bible, with the teaching of the spirit of truth and grace, I hope he will be made wise to salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus. Thus may he, and your other dear boys, be blessed indeed, and for ever. Let us be respectfully mentioned to all inquiring friends, and assure yourselves of your living in the hearts of

I. S. AND J. KEITH.

TO REV MR. P.

CHARLESTON, AUGUST 6, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR favour, under date July 11th, was duly received, at the same time with one from Mrs. M. to Mrs. K. Mrs. K. will endeavour ere long to reciprocate Mrs. M's favour. For yours, accept my sincere thanks. I was much gratified in receiving and perusing it; and to both of us it was very pleasing to find that you and Mrs. P. with the children, had been favoured with so prosperous and expeditious a passage by sea, and journey by land, that in the space of a

fortnight after you left *C——lon*, you should have it in your power to write to me from *C——town*; and there in the hospitable mansion of our mutual worthy friends, to tell us of their welfare, of that of their family, and that your own health is improving. Has your gratitude in all its proper feelings and expressions, kept pace with the rich variety, and rapid succession of the goodness and mercy of the Lord, which have attended and followed you and yours? I presume you think that it is well for you, that though this is your most reasonable and pleasant duty, yet on this are you not to found your hopes, of the mercy and grace, which you still need to make the rest of your way prosperous and comfortable. Where you do not adequately praise, and love, and obey, you may acceptably repent and believe, and repenting and believing, you may still hope, in and through that divine Mediator, who is the Lord, your righteousness and strength. For his sake, may the God of your mercies still preserve your going out and coming in, and assure your heart that He is with you to keep you in all places, through which you pass, until he bring you again in peace to your home and church; and then give you the disposition, together with the occasion for saying, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!"

The variegated, beautiful, magnificent scenery, through which you have passed, and with which you will be almost continually surrounded in the northern and middle States, must be highly interesting to your imagination and feelings; and the air and exercise, which you are enjoying on so agreeable a tour, will, I trust, have the most favourable influence, on the im-

provement of your health and constitution. If you find preaching does not injure yourself, be not reluctant to do all the good which may be in your power, in this way to others. But let not the easiness of your temper, be prevailed on by any importunity, to relieve any *lazy brethren, especially* by labours beyond your present strength, and which would prevent or retard that increase of strength, which you should endeavour to acquire while abroad, with the view of spending it again in the service, and for the benefit of your own people at home.

The season here, excepting eight or ten days, about the middle of July, when the weather was extremely warm and dry, has been on the whole the most pleasant that I have ever enjoyed in Carolina; and the city has continued hitherto very healthy. Oh, that we would praise the Lord for his mercies; and render again to him according to the benefits received from him!

The affairs of our church remain much in the same state in which you left them. What the issue will be, is known only to the great Head of the church. May He bring good out of evil, and overrule all circumstances, however adverse and threatening they may appear, to work for the good of his church, which he has bought with his blood, and which he cherishes with the most watchful and tender solicitude as the apple of his eye. And we may rest assured, that in his everlasting and unchangeable love to it, he will disappoint every weapon formed against it by its enemies; and correct every error of its friends, so that learning wisdom under the discipline of his hand, as well as by the teaching of

his word and spirit, they may better understand the proper methods of promoting its interests.

Before you left this place, I believe, the constitution of the Bible Society was adopted. An election of the Board of Managers took place on the 10th of July; the result of which you may probably see in some of the newspapers. On the several subscription papers, the names of about 300 members, and funds to the amount of about $2500 have been procured. There are about 20 life subscribers, of $50 each. On the list in my hands, there have been received *twelve of these life subscribers*, and about *an hundred other subscribers*, and cash to the amount of $1120; and all excepting the instances of a very few who sent to me their names and their money, within the limits of our own congregations, from whom I expect still some considerable additions. * * * * *

Adieu, ISAAC S. KEITH.

TO REV. DR. S.

CHARLESTON, MAY 3, 1791, TUESDAY.

REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

This is Jubilee week in Charleston. Almost all business is suspended, and joy and rejoicing universally prevail. This you would naturally expect on the present occasion; when you hear that the illustrious and beloved President of the United States is now among us. He arrived here yesterday about one o'clock. In his way he had to cross a ferry on Cooper

river at its junction with the bay of Charleston, three miles wide from Haddrell's point to the city. Over this he was conveyed in an elegant barge, displaying a splendid flag of the United States, and rowed by thirteen American captains of vessels, all dressed in a beautiful uniform of sky blue silk jackets. Their oars moved in concert with a band of music, playing all the way. Sloops, schooners, pettiangers, and boats of various descriptions, to the number of perhaps two and three score, freighted with ladies, gentlemen, &c. &c. attended the barge that was honored with the important and distinguished trust of carrying the President, and constituted a fine fleet, which, in the eyes of the citizens of Charleston, appeared incomparably more glorious and charming, than all the royal navy of Great Britain, which filled their port and the neighbouring rivers, during the years of the late revolution. The atmosphere was clear and serene, the sun shone brightly, without any excess of heat; and the water was gently and agreeably moved by a sweet refreshing breeze. On turning a point of land near the city, which brought the fleet full in view of the inhabitants, a federal salute was fired by a ship prepared for that purpose in the harbour. All the vessels in the harbour, were dressed as gaily as their respective wardrobes would permit. The numbers and variety of people who filled the vessels, decks and tops, the wharves, the streets, the doors, the windows, the balconies, and even some of the roofs of the houses, you can more easily imagine than I can describe. When the barge arrived at the wharf, the President was received and welcomed on shore and in Charleston, by the Governor and Lieut. Governor, the principal officers of the Union and of

the State, and by the foreign consuls, and escorted by a guard of militia, well equipped and dressed in handsome uniform; under a loud peal of huzzas from the surrounding crowd: and now a feu de joy was fired by the corps of artillery paraded in Bay-street, opposite to the place of landing. This corps, which served their country with great honor during the late war, made a truly military, and very respectable appearance. They are also militia, composed of the citizens. From the place of landing, the President, now attended by the honorable company by which he was first received, proceeded up to Bay-street, adjoining the wharf; and thence led a procession formed of the different orders of citizens, whose stations had been previously assigned by lot; except that of the clergy, to whom the honor was given of walking next after the President and principal officers of government and foreign ministers. The procession moved along Bay-street, till the head of it advanced to the Exchange. Then the President, accompanied by the Governor, and those who immediately followed, including the clergy, ascended the steps of the Exchange, and took his station on an elevated and spacious platform, which belongs to that elegant building. Here another feu de joy was fired by the artillery, accompanied by a loud and general huzza, huzza, huzza. Here the rest of the procession passed by, down the same street, and had all an opportunity of seeing and saluting the President, and receiving the honors of his bows and smiles. And here all the company attending around him, had the honor and pleasure of taking him by the hand. After this ceremony, he with his attendants, descended again into the street; and then the procession facing about, the rear became

the front of those who had remained in the street ; and in this order they followed him and the preceding company along Broad-street, as far as to Church-street, and then down Church-street nearly the distance of a square, to the house provided for his accommodation, during his stay in the city ; and there with three more cheers, they left him to repose himself, till the hour of dinner. He dined in a private manner, with the Governor and a few official gentlemen, and select friends. To-day at 4 o'clock he is to partake of a public dinner at the Exchange, given by the Intendant and Wardens, at the expense of the city. To-morrow, he is to dine with the society of Cincinnati ; the next day with the Governor in public ; the next day with Major Butler, one of our Senators in Congress ; and the next day with the Chamber of commerce, or merchants of Charleston. Several addresses are to be presented to him, which with his answers, you will no doubt, in due season, see in your papers ; and through the same channel, you will probably be favoured with a much better history of the transactions which I have attempted to detail, than is contained in this hastily and carelessly written letter. Thus has it been done, and thus is it proposed to be done to the man, whom the people of Charleston, with an affection and zeal in which they are not exceeded by any of the citizens of the United States, delight to honor. That the ladies too, may have an opportunity of enjoying the pleasure of his presence among them, of paying their respects, and testifying their love to him, and of displaying all their charms of beauty, dress, and address before him, there is to be a splendid ball in a magnificent apartment of the Exchange, on Wednesday evening ; and a grand

concert on another evening. The ornaments provided for the embellishment of the lovely persons of many of our fair citizens on these occasions, are, as I am told, extremely rich and superb; probably in many degrees above the taste of so plain a Virginia planter, as the worthy GEORGE WASHINGTON. There are in particular, many ribbons included among these ornaments, painted with miniature likenesses of the President, or the initials of his name; and the words, *Long live the President:* and, *He comes, the Hero comes,* &c. &c. which, if I mistake not, will appear to his modesty and delicacy more flattering than pleasing. On the whole you may rest assured that no preparations or exertions, which our circumstances will, or will not allow, have been wanting, to render this joyous occasion one of the most brilliant æras, in the history of the splendours and rejoicings of Charleston. But ah! on Monday next, the 9th of May, after a stay of only one short week, the President, who has been the great cause, and the principal lustre of all this bright scene, is to bid us a long farewell, and proceed on his journey to Georgia; and leave us to proceed in our old walks of business and care, which are now generally relinquished for the more attractive pursuits of amusement, and pleasures of festivity. From Georgia, the President is to return through the interior country, to his own seat, and finally to your city, I suppose, in the fall. May God protect, and guide, and bless him; till the course of his useful life is finished; and then add to all the honors which he has received from his fellow men on earth, the infinitely higher and more lasting honors included in that sentence of the great Judge of all, "Well done good and faithful servant: Thou

hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

I thought to have finished my epistle here; but I must go on a little further, as I have yet taken no notice of your last favour, of the 6th of April. I now thank you for this, as I have heretofore done for all your former epistolary favours. Do not fear that you will ever write too often, or too much at a time. We are never tired, but always much gratified with reading your paternal letters: and it will be our fault, if they are not useful to us, as they always contain some good advice; and hints for profitable improvement.

Is it not in this month that the General Assembly of your church meets? Is it well attended; and does it promise to answer the purposes of its institution? I suspect that upon trial, it will be found, that in the formation of that body, and the arrangement of the subordinate synods, the peculiar situation of our country, its extended bounds, &c. have not been duly consulted. Does not the General Assembly appear to be rather too few in number, to execute with adequate authority and dignity, all the great business that comes before it; and are not the subordinate synods neglected, as of too little consequence to be attended by any but those who live near the place of meeting? I have heard suggestions of this kind; and from circumstances, there seems to be reason to conclude that they are too well founded. From long habit, I feel a strong inclination at this season to visit Philadelphia, and attend your church judicatories. But distance now precludes every hope of realizing my wishes, in the manner which I could formerly do it. Here are no such opportunities of at-

tending the meetings of clerical brethren, as occur among you: and I think the want of these a considerable disadvantage of my present situation. But my situation is in so many other respects, so much more desirable, than in my former place of residence, that I have hitherto seen daily reason to be thankful to a kind Providence and his instruments, for pointing out and accomplishing the change.

Assure my dear mother and all the branches of the family, of my continued esteem and affectionate regards, in which a beloved father also shares, as largely as he can wish. I endeavour daily to remember you all at the throne of grace, and hope you will not there forget your children.

I. S. AND H. KEITH.

CHARLESTON, JULY 15, 1811.

TO MR. ANDREW P. GREADY,

PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE been favoured with the very friendly letter, which as President, and in behalf of "*The Congregational Society for Religious Worship*," you lately addressed to me, and in which you politely express their wish, that I would consider myself as a member; at least an honorary one, of the society; and that I would place my name on the list of the subscribers to its rules.

Accept, dear sir, for yourself and the society, my grateful acknowledgments for the honor thus done me. In compliance with their desire, I have added my signature to the rules; and I feel myself, together with my family, cordially disposed to attend the meetings of the society, when circumstances may allow us that pleasure. But from my various engagements, the imperfect state of my health, and the place and seasons of meeting, that will probably be most convenient to the members generally, I am apprehensive, that I shall but rarely have it in my power to attend with them.

The very small services which I have rendered towards the establishment and organization of the society, they have much too highly appreciated. There seemed, indeed, but little need or room for any aid, which I could contribute to the laudable undertaking; as, in my view, it appeared to be conducted, by those most immediately concerned, and engaged in it with a spirit of christain zeal and discretion, which promised, through the blessing of God, the most desirable result.

The pious design met, at once, my entire approbation, and my heart has felt an high gratification in the success, which has thus far attended the counsels and efforts, which have been employed for realizing the important benefits contemplated.

The Lord your God and Saviour, will, I trust, "establish and prosper this work of your hands, in which you have hopefully engaged, with a view to his glory, in the promotion of the great interests of your own souls, and the advancement of his cause in the world, as far as your influence and usefulness can be extended, in the stations which you occupy in the church, and in the community. "The Lord will assuredly be with you, while you are with him." And as you would expect his presence

and favour, let it be still your leading aim, and your most solicitous care, that the great "name of your God may, in all respects, be glorified in and by you, through Jesus Christ your Lord" and mediator: and that you may maintain and cultivate a spirit of love, and harmony among yourselves; ever studying "to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; remembering that there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."*

Cherishing such dispositions, and manifesting them in the general tenor of your conduct, you may, with humble confidence hope, that your Lord, according to the promises of his truth and grace, will be in the midst of you, when from time to time you meet in his name for his worship; and that his blessing will render the religious services in which you unite, subservient to the important purposes of drawing your souls nearer to himself, in the exercises and pleasures of the most improving and delightful communion; of uniting your hearts more closely and tenderly to each other in christian affection, sympathy, and fellowship; and of making you thus eminently helpful to each other, under your various labours and trials, temptations and sorrows, and instrumental to the establishment and advancement of each other's faith, and hope, and peace, and joy on earth, and the increase of each other's meetness for the incorruptible, unfading inheritance of eternal glory and felicity, reserved for the friends and followers of Christ in heaven. While in this way, your walk may be maintained more closely with God, your

* Ephes. iv. 1—4.

light may at the same time, shine more brightly before men, and many around you, "taking knowledge of you, that you have been with Jesus," may be excited and animated, to desire and resolve, that they will become "followers of you, as they see you are of Christ."

Thus your society may be enlarged, which "though its beginning has been small, yet may its latter end become greatly increased;" and thus also new members might be added to the church among such as shall be saved. How interesting, how delightful the thought! that thus you would be pursuing the course, and improving the means most favourable to the growth of your infant institution, of your own souls in grace, and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the church of Christ; and especially of that branch of it with which you are most intimately connected!

The prosperity of "the church, which God our Saviour has bought with his own blood," will, I trust, ever lie near your hearts, and be constantly remembered by you in your prayers. Having thus dearly purchased it, and still regarding it as the apple of his eye, he has spoken glorious things of it, and promised to do great things for it, and these things he will be found able and faithful to accomplish, in their season. "Yet for these things will he be inquired of by his people, that he may do them." And he puts a special honor upon them, when he represents himself as condescending to perform what he has purposed and promised to do, *in answer to their prayers:* and what greater honor and encouragement could be given to *social prayer*, in particular, than what our blessed Lord has given to it? when he says, "If even any two of you shall agree

on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* May this promise be graciously fulfilled to you, as it has been in innumerable instances to others, who, in the Lord's appointed way, have sought and found him, who have asked in faith, and conformably to his declared will, have received the blessings of his grace and favour for themselves, and for others, for whom they have prayed!

In the humble and animating hope that this may be your happy experience, pray constantly and fervently for the peace of Jerusalem; for "the outpouring of the spirit from on high" upon all the branches of the church, that "the Lord's work may be revived," and his salvation be displayed in them with great glory "in the midst of these years;" and that the church itself may "be established, and be a praise in all the earth," and all the nations of tribes of mankind become united in it as brethren of one family, "loving each other with pure hearts fervently, and by love serving one another." And in the view of this most desirable state of Zion's peace and prosperity, forget not to pray for its pastors; and especially for those under whose pastoral care you are placed, that, having "the ministry of reconciliation committed to them," they may faithfully preach the gospel to their hearers, and that, by the co-operating influence of divine grace, it may prove "the power of God, to the salvation of those who hear its joyful sound." How interesting the subject of your prayers, and how animating the hope which you are authorized to cherish in them, when in praying for the ministers of the gospel, you are directed

* Matthew xviii. 18, 19.

to pray, that through their ministry "the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified every where as well as among yourselves;" and when you are assured, by many great and precious promises, that by the universal spread of the light, the truth, and the grace of the gospel, all the people dwelling on the face of the whole earth, shall be taught the knowledge of the only living and true God in Jesus Christ, his Son; and shall be brought to praise and serve him as their God and Saviour, "from the rising of the sun, even to the going down thereof;" and "the whole earth shall be filled with his glory!"

That part of the plan of your society, which relates to the establishment of a small, but select library; consisting chiefly of books on divinity, (inculcating the purest evangelical sentiments, and the best adapted to promote christian practice) appears to me to be a well judged, and very important measure; as it will provide a rich source of improvement to the mind and the heart, and will probably have a considerable effect in promoting the increase of your members, and strengthening the bonds of their union.

It has long been my wish to see a Library, consisting principally of this description of books, owned by our church, and at once adequate to the wants, and appropriated chiefly to the use, of our congregations. The advantages of such an establishment for disseminating correct sentiments and enlarged information on religious subjects, and in exciting the attention of many persons, to their best, their spiritual interests; to the things of their present and eternal peace. I trust that to the members of your society at least, the books which you may now obtain, and which may be gradual-

ly increased, will be productive of much improvement in knowledge and grace.

It has, from the first, been my intention and determination, to contribute some aid to your society, towards the accomplishment of this laudable design, by presenting to them some books, which I supposed would be particularly acceptable and useful to them. Accordingly, together with the books presented by Mr. Woodward, to your society,* I have the pleasure of presenting to the society at the present time in my own name, the books mentioned in the subjoined list. [Here follows the list, amounting to upwards of $50.]

In the choice, and in the use of books, and in your religious exercises and in all your proceedings as a society and as individuals, may you be favoured with that wisdom which is profitable to direct, and with that all-sufficiency of grace, which will enable you, in all the instances of your conduct, "to do all to the glory of God" through Jesus Christ your Redeemer and Mediator.

To the guidance, the keeping, and the blessing of the great and gracious God, even our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I affectionately commend you; and with all christian regards, and my constant prayers for your welfare and happiness, collectively and individually, in time and through eternity, I remain,

Your sincere and cordial friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

* To the amount of $20.

TO DR. E. S.

CHARLESTON, JUNE 11, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your welcome favour, of the 10th of May, I have received. It gave me a very peculiar pleasure. I cordially thank you for it; and I desire to be fervently thankful to the God of all grace, on account of his grace having been so exceedingly abundant towards you, as to enable you to fill your letter with a very pleasing detail of circumstances and events, most important to yourself, and deeply interesting to all your friends. The history of heroes and conquerors, of the revolutions of nations, and establishment of empires, that have filled the earth with fame and glory, shrinks into insignificance, in the view of an immortal soul, delivered by the Almighty Redeemer from the bondage of satan and the chains of sin; and by the enlightening, new creating energy of the spirit of grace, emerging from darkness to light, passing from death to life, and rising from self to God, and from earth to heaven.

Has such, my dear friend, been the great, the happy change, which you have experienced? How reasonable, how pleasant, must you, so far at least as you have evidence of your being the subject of such a change, now feel the duty of thanksgiving and praise, while adoring gratitude prompts and constrains you to say with the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Are you a christian indeed? Such, I would

fondly hope you now are. And is there any interest, any honor, any happiness to which the renewed, sanctified heart can aspire, that is not included in the character and state of a christian; while for such it is provided, by the sure, well-ordered, everlasting covenant, of which Jesus is the blessed Mediator, that an all-sufficiency of grace, suited to every present necessity, shall be given; and that this grace shall be crowned with future eternal glory! How desirable, indeed, is that state of grace in which, as I trust, you now stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God! And how remarkable the method of the Lord's dealing with you, in order to bring you into this happy state!

If you had been left to yourself, you, with the men of the world, would have chosen your portion in this life. With them you aspired to the honors of the world, you coveted its interests and prosperity; and if the world smiled, and you could repose on the bosom of your beloved family, enjoying, together with yourself, health and temporal comfort, you flattered yourself that your happiness would be complete. How this scene of fancied happiness would have soon terminated, I need not now remind you. Most mercifully have you been awakened from the pleasing, delusive dream, and taught "to seek superior bliss." Your plans and prospects of ambition and of wealth, were disconcerted and disappointed; and a darling child, that was becoming more and more the idol of your heart, was removed to the bosom of your Lord, who says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The hopes, also, which you were building on the ground of your own righteousness, soon fell before the power of sin, dwell-

ing in you, and under the sentence of the law, applied by the Spirit, and convincing you, that by no present or future obedience, or repentance, or reformation, could you ever be justified before God.

"All these things," your sense and your reason were ready to exclaim, "all these things are against me!" But God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are our ways his ways. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts, saith the Lord." And accordingly, you have found the dispensations of his providence, which to you were most obscure, perplexing, and distressing, accompanied by his sanctifying blessing, made to work together most effectually for your good. Your favourite schemes and hopes of worldly joy were broken, that you might be constrained to seek your all in God; and that your soul might be compelled to seek its rest in the Redeemer, who gives his peace to all that come to him believing, and trusting in his name, and a peace such as the world can neither give, nor take away.

Thus through the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, all those apparent adverse and threatening circumstances and events, under which your heart was inclined to be so restive and rebellious, have been made instrumental to promote your humiliation and repentance, to excite you to fly for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before you, in the Saviour of the guilty, the wretched, and the helpless, and have happily turned to the furtherance of your salvation. And now, when you see that like the blind, you were led in a way that you knew not, and in the right and best way to present peace and future joy, it may surely be most reasonably

expected of you, that with a lively gratitude you will acknowledge, that the Lord hath done all things well for you; and that under an affecting sense of your obligations, you will be disposed to consecrate yourself, and your all, to his service and glory, so that you may live no longer to yourself, but entirely to the God of your mercies and salvation. From the tenor of your letter, I am led to hope and believe, that thus you are disposed and resolved, through grace, henceforth to live to the noblest and best of purposes, and worthy of the profession and hopes of a christian.

But still "you fear, that you are only deceiving yourself with a name to live, while you may yet be dead; because you have not felt such convictions of the guilt and enormity of sin, as others appear to have done; and you do not feel that affection and zeal, which you should do towards that blessed Saviour, who made such an inexpressible sacrifice for perishing sinners."

Such fears and such complaints, my dear friend, are sooner or later, and in a greater or less degree, generally experienced by real penitents and sincere believers. The more, indeed, they see and feel the evil of sin, the more sensible are they of the disproportion of their humiliations and sorrows, to the evil which they really lament and abhor; and the more clearly they perceive their infinite obligations to the dear Redeemer, to whom they are so deeply indebted, the more defective and unworthy do they think those returns of gratitude, love and obedience, with which they would honor him. And remember, that an eminent part of the trials of christians consists in the conflicts of remaining corruptions, with the principles of grace implanted, and living, and still growing in the new-born soul of the real

believer. Nor can they, certainly, be altogether strangers to the christian life, who can sincerely say with the apostle, "That which I do I allow not; for what I would that I do not; but what I hate that I do," &c. Such is the frequent experience of the best of christians; and this experience, though very painful in itself, is yet well adapted to empty them more and more of pride and self in every form, and to render the Saviour, who is the end of the law for righteousness to all believers, and in whom all fulness dwells, for the supply of all their wants, more and more precious to their souls. To him, then, resort with faith and prayer, and in him repose your trust, under all your difficulties and discouragements; and rest assured, that you will still find his grace sufficient for you, and his strength made perfect in your weakness, for the whole of the work and warfare to which he calls you.

But I have already passed the bounds which I had prescribed to myself; and it seems to be almost superfluous, if not indeed assuming in me, to have made the observations respecting your case which I have done; or to have suggested hints of advice to you, who are already so well instructed, and who have such excellent guides in the pious, judicious, and experienced authors, whose writings you may daily peruse.

Henry is an excellent commentator. But I would, in preference, recommend Scott to you, for your assistance in consulting the Sacred Oracles of God; as the latter is not less, if not even more evangelical than the former, and his notes and practical observations are peculiarly instructive, interesting and impressive.

In Newton's Works, especially in his letters, you will find such a plenty, and variety, and excellence of

advice, admonition, consolation and encouragement, conveyed in the most pleasing and engaging language and manner, that you will see reason enough for my being ashamed of scrawling a line on any subject touched by the hand of such a master, in my communications to any friend, who is possessed of his valuable volumes. One of my subordinate inducements towards sending you the two volumes of his posthumous works, was rather of a selfish nature; I mean the expectation that such a present, considering how much valuable and suitable instruction it contains, would have a tendency to preclude your asking any communications from my pen, sterile and sluggish, as I know it is, and as you will now feel it to be. I believe you have Buck's Miscellaneous Works: and his treatise on Religious experience, and Young Christian's Guide, you will find peculiarly worthy of your attention. I wish you had also Scott's Theological Works. They are generally very valuable; and his Essays on the leading doctrines and duties, &c. of christianity, are pre-eminently excellent. But in recommending good books, it is difficult to know where to stop. Still, however, let the inspired word of God be chiefly studied, with earnest prayer for the teaching of his spirit, by which alone it can become effectual, for making us wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ; and profitable to us for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, and for furnishing us thoroughly unto all good works, and thus advancing us in our progress towards christian perfection.

While I have been saying so much about books, I suppose you have been feeling, with a lively sensibility, and therefore need not now be reminded by me,

how peculiarly thankful you ought to be, to the God of your mercies, for having so graciously and so seasonably prepared, the dear wife of your bosom, the amiable and beloved partner of your soul, to be indeed an help-meet for you, and a most pleasant and useful companion to you, in the christian as well as in the natural life.

What a privilege, to be united in the bonds of the sure, well ordered, everlasting covenant of grace! What a blessing and happiness, to be prepared to dwell together as joint heirs of the grace of life, as mutual helpers of each other's faith and joy on earth, in the way to glory and felicity, complete and everlasting in the kingdom of heaven! May the Lord establish his covenant with you both, and build you up a sure house, and be indeed a God to you and your seed after you; and more and more bless you both, together with the dear children which he has graciously given you and spared to you, and make you all blessings indeed to each other, for time and eternity!

Have you now at length sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness, in preference to all other things? May you not then hope, and with confidence believe, that all other things, needful and good for you, shall be added to you?

And if it would be best for you, the Lord you know, could easily bless your latter end, as he did that of Job, more than your beginning, with worldly good and creature comforts! But in bestowing on you his grace, he gives you the best blessings of his favour; and his grace will most effectually teach you to be content with such things as you have of a worldly nature.

I cannot but cherish the pleasing hope, that in due time, the way may be opened for your return to Charles-

ton, where your situation may be more pleasant, and the sphere of your usefulness be much more enlarged, than it probably is at present. But your times and mine are in the Lord's hands. May he prepare us for all his appointments, and dispose and enable us to say, in all circumstances, the will of the Lord be done!

You have probably seen in the newspapers, the advertisement respecting the design of forming a Bible Society in this city. A meeting, in consequence, took place this day, at 1 o'clock P. M. in the Hall of the South Carolina Society, on Meeting-street, when and where were present, about sixty I believe, of the friends to this design; and among these were several of our leading, influential characters, judges, lawyers, physicians, merchants, planters, &c. &c. Mr. Thomas Lowndes was called to the chair, and Mr. William H. Gibbes was the secretary, at this meeting. It was unanimously agreed, that a Bible Society should be established in this city, and that the persons present would, with others that may come into the measure, be members of it. A committee of seven was appointed to draught a constitution for the society, and to lay it before another meeting of the citizens, to be holden on Monday next. Thus far appearances are promising, in favour of this most charitable and important undertaking; and it is hoped, that the smiles and the blessing of heaven, will crown it with success, and make the institution a source of rich, of everlasting blessings to many, who, through the scriptures distributed by this charity, may be made wise unto salvation, through faith in our divine Redeemer. What can you, and your friends around you, do to help us, in doing the greatest good that we can do to our fellow mortals, by giving to

those who want, and who would improve, that inestimably precious Book which contains the words of eternal life, and which alone shews to fallen, ruined, perishing men, the way of salvation ?

From the length of this, you will readily perceive, that I do not calculate writing often to you. But be assured, that your communications to me, and the more frequent and particular they may be, the better, will always be highly acceptable to me.

In very affectionate regards and best wishes, to Mrs. S. and yourself, Mrs. K. cordially unites, with your sincere friend,

ISAAC S. KEITH.

FINIS.